United Nations S/PV.7399

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7399th meeting

Thursday, 5 March 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Ms. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Adamu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Woodifield
	United States of America	Mr. Ried
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Special report of the Secretary-General on the strategic assessment of the United Nations presence in Libya (S/2015/113)

Letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/128)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2015/144)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the *United Nations (http://documents.un.org)*.

15-06036 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Special report of the Secretary-General on the strategic assessment of the United Nations presence in Libya (S/2015/113)

Letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/128)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2015/144)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/158, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/144, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, as well as to document S/2015/113, which contains the special report of the Secretary-General on the strategic assessment of the United Nations presence in Libya. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/128, which contains the text of a letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2208 (2015).

The meeting rose at 3.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7400

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7400th meeting
Friday, 6 March 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-06188 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division in the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: In the six weeks since I last briefed the Council, on 26 January (see S/PV.7368), there have been a number of significant developments related to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The most pivotal was the signing, in Minsk on 12 February by the Trilateral Contact Group and rebel representatives, of a package of measures for implementing the Minsk agreements. The agreement, the result of tireless diplomacy on the part of Chancellor Merkel, President Hollande, President Poroshenko and President Putin, provides a road map for lasting peace in eastern Ukraine.

Recognizing that fact, on 17 February the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2202 (2015), thereby providing the peace process in eastern Ukraine with a binding international framework for further engaging all sides to find an urgent and lasting solution to the conflict. However, as we converged in this Chamber on that same day (see S/PV.7384), the fight for Debaltseve reached its climax, with hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent civilians caught in the crossfire. As Ambassador Tagliavini, one of the signatories to the 12 February Minsk agreement, remarked to the Council on 27 February (see S/PV.7395), the rebels' unabated attacks for control over that strategic area were in clear violation of the agreement they had signed only five days before.

Since 18 February, the situation appears to have calmed. However, as we are all well aware, the ceasefire remains fragile, not yet having taken hold firmly across the region. Sporadic violations are reported frequently, including in the south near Mariupol and, once again, near Donetsk airport.

The Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has monitored some withdrawals of heavy military equipment from the line of contact but, due to a lack of access and freedom of movement for its monitors, the Mission remains unable to verify the true extent of that process. It is also yet to receive baseline information regarding the sides' inventory, routes for withdrawal and where the weapons will be stored. As per the commitments undertaken by the parties in Minsk, full and unfettered access must be given to the OSCE and the withdrawal of heavy weaponry must commence urgently, transparently and comprehensively.

We are aware that there will be no significant traction on the political track unless the prerequisite ceasefire and withdrawal of weapons are fully implemented. The history of this conflict has taught us that the window of opportunity to make those processes irreversible is limited.

Eastern Ukraine still appears to be in limbo as we await the full implementation of the Minsk package of measures. The road ahead will be difficult, but it is critical that all concerned strictly adhere to, and commence the good-faith implementation of, that agreement. We welcome the continued efforts of the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany, as well as the crucial role played by the OSCE.

Let me also take this opportunity to touch briefly on President Poroshenko's 17 February statement noting that Ukraine will be requesting a possible deployment of a United Nations-mandated peace mission to Ukraine. Subsequent to that, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Klimkin held discussions with the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Ladsous and me on this issue. We informed the Foreign Minister that it was a decision for the members of the Security Council and that the Secretariat would be guided by the

Council's decision. To date, no formal request has been received from Ukraine.

With reference to the OSCE briefings to the Council on 27 February and the call for the United Nations to do more, the Secretariat continues its close cooperation with the OSCE on what more could be done to support the OSCE's difficult and complex mandates.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ging.

Mr. Ging: On behalf of Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, I would like to deliver the following statement on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

One year ago Ukraine had no displaced people; now, as a result of the conflict, there are almost 1.1 million people registered as internally displaced, more than 100,000 of them displaced in the last month. More than 670,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries. Displacement continues, as pauses in the fighting in some locations has allowed people who are trapped to flee. More than 2 million people are living in conflict-affected areas, the majority of them with limited access to basic services. Only 180,000 people now remain in the city of Horlivka, as compared to 276,000 before the conflict. Only 8,000 people remain in Dokuchaievsk, as compared to 30,000 before the conflict. And in Debaltseve, where the re-conflict population stood at over 25,000, fewer than 7,000 people remain — 5,000 of them are estimated to be living underground in basements and improvised bunkers.

Five million people across the country are now in need of humanitarian assistance — 1 million in Government-controlled areas and 3 million in non-Government-controlled areas. Approximately 1.4 million people have no access to health care. Those remaining in conflict-affected areas, in particular in densely populated urban areas, face ongoing security threats due to military activities. Lives have been lost, basic life-saving services have been disrupted, access to banking and cash services is limited, food and non-food items are increasingly scarce and expensive and there is an upsurge in lawlessness across the country.

We welcome the package of measures for the implementation of the minsk agreements, but continue to urge all parties to the conflict to adhere to the 15 February ceasefire and to protect civilians. The ceasefire remains fragile but, where observed, has allowed a limited increase in humanitarian access. Most recently, on 19 February, 62 tons of humanitarian aid was delivered to Donetsk city by United Nations convoy. Supplies included essential hygiene items, warm clothes, blankets, condensed milk powder, drinking water and medicines.

Despite limited humanitarian access to affected areas due to insecurity and administrative obstacles, by the end of 2014 humanitarian actors had provided health kits to 2.6 million people, vaccinations for 30,000 people, clean water and sanitation facilities for more than 100,000 displaced people and food supplies for 100,000 people. Despite those efforts, needs still far outweigh the combined capacity of the humanitarian community and the Government of Ukraine to respond. It is imperative that humanitarian actors be able to reach those in need with life-saving assistance. We call on all parties to the conflict to facilitate the safe and unimpeded passage of aid and aid workers and to lift any administrative obstacles to such passage.

The Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Neal Walker, is coordinating the humanitarian response of United Nations agencies and national and international non-governmental organizations to ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Coordination structures, including sector-specific clusters, have been put in place in Ukraine. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is present in the six key areas across the country.

Additional funding to address the immediate humanitarian needs of those affected by this conflict is urgently needed. Ukraine's humanitarian response plan, launched on 24 February, calls for $316 million to reach 3.2 million people in the most dire humanitarian need. To date, only 13 per cent of that appeal — a mere $42.2 million — has been either received or pledged. We thank those Member States that have contributed, with the largest financial contributions so far coming from the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Commission, Germany and Denmark. Several Member States, most notably the Russian Federation, have provided significant material assistance.

It is essential that the millions of civilians caught up in this conflict, many of whom have been traumatized by violence and severe hardship, be able to return to

their homes and be given access to basic, life-saving services is restored. We call on all parties to the conflict to respect the ceasefire and put an end to the violence.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ging for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Šimonović.

Mr. Šimonović: The ninth report of the United Nations Human Rights Mission in Ukraine, whose mandate has just been renewed for a further three months, was released on 2 March. It covers the period from 1 December 2014 to 15 February 2015. Today I will highlight some of the report's key findings and provide an update on developments since the cut-off date.

Although since the 12 February Minsk agreement the ceasefire in Ukraine has held up in general, with a few isolated incidents of small arms and mortar shelling reported, the human rights situation, especially in eastern Ukraine, has remained alarming. Particularly in January and the first half of February, the stark escalation of hostilities led to increased violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, with a sharp spike in casualties and devastating consequences for the local population. From mid-April 2014 until 15 February 2015, at least 5,665 people were documented as killed; by 5 March, the figure increased to at least 5,820. Given that full reports on casualties, especially near Donetsk airport and in the Debaltseve area, are still pending, we estimate that the total number of people killed in eastern Ukraine has now passed the 6,000 mark.

Allow me to highlight a number of disturbing trends in the human rights situation in Ukraine.

First, during the reporting period there was an increased use of sophisticated and heavy weaponry, including multiple launch rocket systems. Those types of weapons were used during the 24 January attack on Mariupol, which killed 31 people, including two children. In the east up until the ceasefire of 15 February, and in the Debaltseve area beyond the ceasefire, there was continued indiscriminate shelling of highly populated civilian areas, both in areas controlled by the Government and those controlled by the armed groups, with an escalating toll on civilians. The deliberate targeting of civilians may constitute a war crime and could amount to a crime against humanity if widespread or systematic. Attacks caused heavy damage to civilian property and vital infrastructure. By 4 March, the number of residential buildings destroyed during the conflict period on the territory of the Donetsk region exceeded 9,500. Approximately 150,000 local residents of the Donetsk region alone still remain without water, gas and electricity. Hospitals, schools and kindergartens have been shelled in both Government-controlled and armed-groups controlled areas, limiting access to health care and education. The situation is aggravated by the alleged continued inflow of heavy weaponry and foreign fighters from the Russian Federation.

Secondly, many civilians have remained trapped in the conflict zone, with ongoing and severe restrictions on the freedom of movement. According to the Government, the situation of approximately 4,000 people remaining in 21 facilities of institutional care in the areas under the control of armed groups is particularly precarious. The lack of vital medicines and food is also of major concern. The armed groups have on several occasions stated that they will not allow the evacuation of people from social care institutions, such as older persons or the bedridden. Nothing has been done to evacuate prisoners either. It is essential that these most vulnerable groups be evacuated as a matter of priority, and as part of an obligation under international humanitarian law.

Thirdly, there is a clear indication that the divide in Ukrainian society continues to deepen. With every new attack on the civilian population, with every new case of arbitrary detention and torture, with every new deprivation of basic services to those remaining in the territory under the control of the armed groups, with every new displacement, the divide deepens. A terrorist attack in Kharkiv, which killed four people by an explosive device on 22 February, and 14 attacks in Odesa since December, targeting pro-Maidan offices and supporters, are further contributing to the negative trend. At the same time, there is growing dissatisfaction among the Ukrainian population over the fighting in the east, and there have been a series of anti-mobilization protests around the country.

Fourthly, the humanitarian situation is increasingly affecting the social and economic rights of the population as a whole. The enormous influx of registered internally displaced persons (IDPs), as already reported by Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, is placing an ever-heavier burden on the Government and on the Ukrainian people. Just this week, the Parliament passed a bill reducing already low pensions in order to satisfy

conditions for the much-needed International Monetary Fund loan and to allow social payments to IDPs. It is clear that the price of the conflict rises for every individual Ukrainian, as the cost of living continues to soar, the threat of potential gas and heating shortages becomes more likely and the value of the hryvnia declines, along with the standard of living. Ultimately, the much-needed and long-promised reforms are severely jeopardized as they are moved further and further down the Government's list of priorities.

Against that backdrop, it remains absolutely crucial that the Government show resolve and commitment to fight corruption and to render impartial justice and accountability for all human rights violations, regardless of the perpetrators or the victims. Impartial accountability can help deter future human rights violations, preserve the confidence of the people in their Government and contribute to the healing of psychological wounds. In that context, the judgement rendered by the regional administrative court on 19 February, which found that the State emergency service was responsible for inaction during 2 May disorders in Odesa, is a welcome step in the right direction. Nonetheless, progress in the investigations into human rights violations related to the Maidan events remains slow. After one year, only four persons have been arrested, two of whom are being tried currently. However, as yet no one has been convicted for the violence that led to the deaths of 117 people.

Impartial justice and accountability must also apply to those who have committed violations in the context of the hostilities. While the initiation of some 49 criminal proceedings against servicemen of the Ukrainian armed forces and National Guard for human rights violations was a welcome development, it appears that most cases were not pursued due to disputes over the official status of those presumably involved. In the same vein, it is also very alarming that the key defence witness in the case against former mayor of Slovyansk Nelya Shtepa was abducted and found murdered on 30 January, which effectively intimidates other witnesses from coming forward.

At the same time, the armed groups continue to violate the most basic human rights of the population trapped in the areas under their control. The Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine continues to document cases of torture, ill-treatment and disappearances. On 22 January, a dozen Ukrainian servicemen captured at Donetsk airport were forced to march through the streets of Donetsk. Several were reportedly physically assaulted by members of the armed groups and by onlookers. It is recalled that such degrading and humiliating treatment of prisoners may constitute a war crime.

The situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is also deteriorating, with systematic human rights violations affecting mostly Crimean Tatars and those who opposed the March referendum. The Deputy Chairman of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Mr. Ahtem Ciygoz, was placed in pre-trial detention for his participation in a pro-Ukrainian protest a year ago. That is in addition to the continued ban against the historical leaders of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Mr. Mustafa Jemilev and current Chair Refat Chubarov, to return to Crimea. According to Mr. Chubarov, there are serious allegations of attempts to break the autonomy of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis and replace its leadership with pro-Russian candidates. The pressure on Crimean Tatar media also continues.

It is absolutely necessary that all sides fully respect the 12 February Minsk agreement. It is the only way out of a crisis, which is not only national but also regional and, increasingly, global. I especially welcome the all-for-all formula for the release of detainees. I have advocated for the formula with representatives of the armed groups, the Government and the facilitators. However, so far it has not been properly applied. Piecemeal prisoner exchanges, which have taken place so far, stimulate arbitrary arrests in order to have more prisoners to exchange. The full implementation of an all-for-all release formula would be an important confidence-building measure and a real test of the commitment of parties to end the conflict. I therefore call on both parties to implement it fully and immediately.

At the same time, the Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko remains in solitary confinement in a pre-trial detention centre in the Russian Federation. It is highly important to ensure that Ms. Savchenko is released from custody immediately. She should either be released under the all-for-all formula or on humanitarian grounds, because of her health conditions.

In conclusion, the human rights situation in Ukraine remains grave. There are fears that hostilities may resume, and concerns about a military campaign on Mariupol. That could entail many more casualties, significantly escalate the conflict and lead to its further internationalization. After more than 6,000

killed, 1 million displaced, hundreds of thousands of refugees, and continuing violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, the conflict has still not reached the point of no return. However, the window of opportunity seems to be rapidly closing. We simply cannot afford to let that happen.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Šimonović for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Murmokaite (Lithuania): I thank you, Sir, for having convened today's meeting. I would also like to thank the three briefers for their valuable and sobering contributions. It is hard to disagree with the statements made by Under-Secretary-General Feltman and Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović that the window of opportunity is very small and may be closing very fast.

Following the diplomatic efforts in the Normandy format aimed at finding a solution to the Ukrainian conflict, a package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements of 5 and 19 September 2014 was agreed upon on 12 February. The Security Council put its weight behind th0se agreements by adopting resolution 2202 (2014), on 17 February.

Since then, some positive developments have taken place, including the initial exchange of prisoners and a significant reduction in the death toll. However, further steps are urgently needed. All illegally detained persons must be released, including the Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who spent more than 80 days on a hunger strike and whose health is close to a point of no return.

Serious concerns remain regarding the verification of the withdrawal of heavy weaponry and continuing instances of ceasefire violations, including near Mariupol and Donetsk airport.

We note the assessment by the Special Monitoring Mission that attacks on Government-controlled towns east of Mariupol may indicate an attempt to test the eastern defences of the city. We stress that any attempts by the Russia-backed militants to seek to gain control of additional territory will be a clear breach of the Minsk agreements and will seriously undermine all efforts to promote a sustainable political solution.

Monitors of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) continue to face severe restrictions. Russia-backed armed groups continue to deny access, including to Shyrokyne and Kruzhylivka; they also continue to harass and threaten the personnel of the Special Monitoring Mission. That is clearly unacceptable and a violation of the Minsk agreements and their implementation measures.

The OSCE Mission has not been provided with the requested detailed information, including the inventory of weapons, withdrawal routes and concentrations points, as per the Minsk agreements. Valid questions therefore remain regarding whether the illegal militants are withdrawing their weaponry or merely regrouping under the guise of doing so.

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that OSCE border-monitoring activities remain restricted to 40 metres out of some 400 kilometres. As we know, Russia has repeatedly blocked efforts to expand border monitoring.

It is paramount that Russia stop destabilizing the situation in eastern Ukraine and stop supporting illegal armed groups operating there. Its soldiers must be withdrawn from the territory of Ukraine. It must put an end to the movement of mercenaries across its borders into Ukrainian territory and stop support to the illegal militants. Russia should also use its influence with the illegal armed groups to ensure that the ceasefire is fully and unconditionally respected and that the withdrawal of the heavy weapons can be duly monitored.

The OSCE Monitoring Mission should be provided full and unhindered access to all areas. It must be able to exercise its mandate independently, without obstruction or interference. We look forward to the early extension of the Mission's mandate for a 12-month period. Adequate financing and resourcing must be ensured for the Mission to carry out its mandate.

Civilians have borne the brunt of this conflict, which started a year ago with the illegal annexation of Crimea in blatant breach of the Charter of the United Nations. The false pretext of defending the rights of Russian speakers was used to invade Crimea and promote separatism in eastern Ukraine. While fighting imagined human rights violations, Russia and the illegal militants it supports have caused a real humanitarian crisis and real and dramatic human rights violations in the regions affected by the illegal actions.

Normal life in those regions has been disrupted, leading to displacement, destruction and deaths. The

numbers were given by John Ging of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). At least 1 million have resettled within the country, placing a heavy burden on the authorities as well as on local communities. Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović has spoken about that. The humanitarian crisis is most acute, aggravated by the cold winter. Russia and the illegal armed groups it supports bear full responsibility for the devastation that has befallen Ukraine.

We welcome the efforts of OCHA, United Nations agencies and other international organizations aimed at alleviating the suffering of the people in eastern Ukraine. It is imperative that all humanitarian actors should be provided unfettered access to all affected areas for a prompt and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian assistance should be provided in line with international law and in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty. Russia's so-called humanitarian convoys remain a cause of concern, as they are operating in violation of the accepted norms of humanitarian assistance and in breach of Ukraine's borders and sovereignty.

Reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have repeatedly documented the catastrophic breakdown of the rule of law and ongoing massive human-rights violations in the militant-held areas, including abductions, arbitrary detentions, beatings, torture and summary executions. There are also numerous instances of serious violations of international humanitarian law, to which Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović just referred. The capture and parading of Ukrainian prisoners of war by the militants constitute a possible war crime. The capture of Donetsk airport revealed bodies of executed Ukrainian servicemen with their hands tied behind their backs, as documented in the latest reports.

Attacks against journalists and media outlets continue. At least 60 cases of attacks against the media offices were recorded, and 78 journalists have been held by armed groups since March last year, according to the report. The whereabouts of some remain unknown.

The latest human rights monitoring mission report speaks eloquently of the disturbing human rights situation in occupied Crimea. The Tatar community, those who opposed the sham referendum a year ago, religious communities and minorities are facing threats, harassment, intimidation, abductions and forced disappearances.

Since the annexation by the Russian Federation, the public space in Crimea has been shrinking. The fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly have been severely curtailed. All those holding Ukrainian passports are facing restrictions in exercising their political and civil rights, limited access to social services, tight quotas for residence permits and loss of jobs and homes. Out of 600 schools that offered instruction fully in Ukrainian, not a single one remains. Only 20 schools on the peninsula have separate Ukrainian classes — violating the rights of the Ukrainian community in Crimea.

Religious communities have also been affected. Priests, imams and representatives of other religious communities are being threatened with prosecution, detained and harassed, with their prayer houses and monuments desecrated. People are forced to adopt Russian citizenship or lose their property, rights and income.

Crimean Tatars are in an especially serious condition, as they have no other home but Crimea. Their leaders are evicted from the Mejlis, threatened, prosecuted and deported. Major figures, such as Mustafa Jemilev and Refat Chubarov, have been barred from re-entering Crimea. The Deputy Chairman Ahtem Ciygoz is being detained along with a number of other activists. A number of activists are still missing after being abducted as early as May last year. The son the Crimean Tatar leader Jemilev remains in detention in the Russian Federation under trumped up charges.

Media freedom is under siege in Crimea. The broadcasting of the Ukrainian television channels and Ukrainian Internet have been discontinued. Journalists have been threatened, assaulted and attacked. Investigations have been invoked against the Crimean Tatar newspapers.

In spite of Russia's allegations to the contrary and in spite of the extremely difficult circumstances, the Ukrainian authorities are continuing the necessary reform processes. We welcome the Ukrainian President's decree on setting up a constitutional commission, establishing a national council for reform, creating an anti-corruption agency and drafting a national human-rights strategy, which speaks to the Government's commitment to human rights for all. Those efforts must be wholeheartedly encouraged and supported. The Ukrainian people deserve to have reforms put in place expeditiously and effectively. The Maidan events were

not about extremism, as some continue to allege. It was about the passionate desire of the Ukrainian people for reform and for a clear break with a past marked by abuses, corruption, cronyism and graft.

It is also imperative to address the issue of impunity for serious crimes and human-rights violations, including in Crimea and the militant-held areas, which have seen pervasive lawlessness and a total breakdown of accountability. All perpetrators of the most serious crimes, including the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, must be held to account. We call on the Ukrainian authorities to do their utmost in that regard. We also urge Ukraine to complete its accession to the Rome Statute. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that no amnesty should be granted for international crimes, including gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the engagement in Ukraine of the United Nations and its agencies, and of the OSCE. We look forward to continued reporting, including the spot reports of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on human rights in Ukraine, including Crimea. The United Nations, the OSCE and their missions should be given full and unhindered access to all areas in Ukraine, including Crimea. The international community, United Nations agencies and humanitarian actors must step up their efforts to help Ukraine cope with the enormous challenges posed by this year-long foreign-sponsored conflict.

The key to the stabilization of the situation in eastern Ukraine lies in the full implementation of the September 2014 Minsk agreements, as reaffirmed on 12 February. The people of Ukraine have heard enough talk from the international community. The time has come to walk the walk. Russia has caused and sponsored this war, and it remains in Russia's hands to put an end to it by fully and unconditionally abiding by the Minsk agreements, and using its influence on the illegal militants to do the same. Ukraine's political independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity are non-negotiable, and must be respected by all members of the international community without exception.

Ms. Power (United States of America): We continue to believe that compliance with the September Minsk agreements and the February implementation package provides a road map to peace in Ukraine. For the first time since the Minsk implementation package was signed, on 12 February, we have seen a reduction in violence. Of course, no one forgets that Russia and the separatists they have trained, armed, directed and fought alongside started violating their commitments under the package from the first minutes and hours after the deal was signed, by laying siege to Debaltseve, a city dozens of kilometres beyond the contact line, with their deadly and indiscriminate pummelling. Violations started on day one, and violations of the ceasefire continue in a number of places, particularly outside Mariupol, where Russian-backed separatists have engaged in intense fighting, attacking the village of Shyrokyne in recent days.

Unfortunately, although the violence has decreased, there has been only partial compliance with the Minsk implementation package. As the members of the Council know, the package calls for "an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire", not a gradual and partial reduction of fire. It does not say that Russian-backed separatists can continue to shell, engage in sniper fire or use barrel and rocket artillery; yet they have carried attacks using all such methods in recent days. Since 20 February, Russian separatist attacks such as those have killed 15 Ukrainian military personnel and wounded nearly 100 more.

A second condition in the Minsk implementation package is full, unfettered access to the entire conflict zone for monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). While there have been occasional instances when the OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission has been stopped at Ukrainian checkpoints, the restrictions placed on the Mission by Russia and the separatists are documented as widespread. Just as Russia and Russian-backed separatists prevented the Mission from going to Debaltseve while those forces carried out their vicious attack, recent Mission reports chronicle repeated, persistent obstruction from Russian-backed separatists — obstruction that includes even threatening to kill OSCE monitors. To date, the separatists have granted the monitors sporadic access, limited to certain roads when and where it suits them. As we have asked before, the question bears asking again: who obstructs an objective observer other than someone who has something to hide from an unbiased eye?

The Minsk implementation package also calls for a full pull-back of all heavy weapons. That, too, has not happened. Shortly after the package was signed, the

OSCE's chief monitor sent a letter to all the signatories requesting that they provide information on what heavy weapons were present in eastern Ukraine, where they were, which routes would be used to withdraw them and where they would be located after being withdrawn. Russia has not replied, as though if it pretends it has no heavy weapons in Ukraine, we will forget all the tanks, GRAD missiles and other heavy weapons we have watched Russia send across the border. All signatories to the Minsk agreements and the implementation package — Ukraine, on the one side, and Russia and the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic, on the other — are responsible for pulling back heavy weapons. The OSCE must have unfettered, unconditional access in order to verify the withdrawal. Two days ago, Russia sent its seventeenth so-called humanitarian convoy into Ukraine, once again denying international observers and Ukrainian border guards the right to conduct a full and complete inspection of its contents. Russian convoys, which should be coming out of Ukraine, are instead going in. If those convoys are carrying humanitarian assistance, why not allow a full inspection?

The ceasefire weapons pull-back and OSCE verification, neither of which is complete, are among just the immediate steps to be taken in the implementation package. In addition to that, all of the Minsk agreements to date have called for the release of all hostages by all sides. Nadiya Savchenko and other Ukrainians being held in Russia are hostages, just as surely as are those being kept in basements in Donetsk and Luhansk. Again, we call on Russia to release Nadiya Savchenko, who has been on hunger strike for more than 80 days, as well as her Ukrainian counterparts. That is something Russia can do today.

As we have seen before, the separatists have an established track record of using a lull in the fighting to regroup, re-arm and re-supply. Russia supports that process by providing an unlimited supply of guns and weaponry. The United States, and the rest of the world, hopes that will not be the case this time. We are carefully watching what happens in Shyrokyne, a town just east of the strategic port city of Mariupol, which many fear will be the next target of the separatists and Russian military.

The devastating consequences of this conflict have been brought into sharp relief by the most recent report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. More than 1.7 million people have been displaced and more than 5,800 killed — a casualty count that does not include the hundreds of bodies found after Russian-backed separatists finished their deadly siege of Debaltseve. A report from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at the end of last month stated that 500 bodies had been found in houses and basements at the end of the siege — 500 bodies. Homes and basements where people took shelter from the endless barrage of Russian-made mortars and rockets as they rained down on the city's residents, who could not escape. Weeks into the siege, at the end of January, the self-declared leader of the Russian-backed separatists announced that anybody who left would be in the interlocking field of fire of their artillery. From that day, he said, the road would be under fire. Those inside were therefore left with a choice between risking their lives by staying or risking their lives by leaving. Civilians were killed doing both, and, I repeat, 500 bodies were found in homes and basements where people had taken shelter.

The casualties and the displaced are one of the devastating consequences of this conflict. Another, and one we rarely speak about in the Council any more, is the ongoing illegal occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea by a permanent member of the Council. Crimea is important not only because it constitutes a continued violation of the territorial integrity of a sovereign nation — a violation orchestrated in Moscow and dressed up in a sham referendum — but also because it offers a preview of the kind of rule we can expect in the other parts of Ukraine seized by those who see themselves as part of Novorossiya.

Let me give just one example of what it is like to live in that world, from a long list of repressive practices documented in the aforementioned February human-rights report of the United Nations, part of the relentless persecution of the Crimean Muslim Tatar minority. According to the report, on 29 January 2015, the de facto authorities arrested Ahtem Ciygoz, the Deputy Chairman of the Tatar Mejlis, the Tatars' representative council. He was charged, under the Russian criminal code, with having participated in a "mass disturbance" for protesting against what was then the imminent Russian occupation, which ended in a clash with pro-Russian demonstrators. On 7 February, another Crimean Tatar was detained on the same charges. Both men are charged with violating Russian law, even though Russian law had not even taken effect at the time that they participated in the protest.

Yesterday the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media released a statement saying that media freedom in Crimea was at an all time low. Among other violations, she reported that,

"Journalists from at least 13 independent media outlets, free lance journalists and bloggers have been threatened, assaulted, physically attacked, banned from entry, interrogated and kidnapped; their equipment confiscated or damaged."

The Russian Federation occupies territory, unilaterally attempts to annex it and then retroactively and arbitrarily applies its laws to those who dared to question its take-over as it was occurring. It does not get much more Orwellian than that. As anyone who has read the human rights report knows, that is just one in a long list of repressive tactics, including torture, enforced disappearances and targeted political killings that have defined Russia's occupation.

It is to avoid an Orwellian world like that, where we talk of peace while undermining it, that we must ensure that the Minsk agreements are implemented. The Council members around this table must confront the situation on the ground as it exists, rather than as we wish it were. Peace will not come from more words, and there have been so many words in this Chamber. It will come from the long-awaited and faithful implementation of the many agreements that have been entered into, and renewed respect for the territorial integrity of a State Member of the United Nations.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The last three speakers employed 50 shades of black. We would like to call on everyone to be more objective, which is in the interest of settling the conflict. However, we understand that in this case such appeals are useless.

We are grateful to Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman and to the Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. John Ging, for their briefings.

With regard to Mr. Ivan Šimonović, we believe that his briefing to the Security Council is inappropriate for several reasons. First, the Council has not taken a decision to establish the human rights mission in Ukraine and had not asked for a reporting line. Secondly, Mr. Šimonović already had an opportunity, just a few days ago, to address the Human Rights Council in Geneva and to convey his views to Member States. This is a classic example of a duplication of effort in the United Nations. Previous appearances by Mr. Šimonović the Security Council have led only to an excessive politicization of the issue. Objectivity was sacrificed to propaganda. It has reached the point where the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine has begun to express its views on military aspects that have nothing to do with human rights issues. That is why today we will not comment on Mr. Šimonović's report or on his briefing. We have already done so in Human Rights Council.

On 17 February, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2202 (2015), which approves a package of measures aimed at implementing the Minsk agreements, which established a framework for peaceful settlement and a way to address the conflict in the Council. The package of measures of 12 February raised the bar for the settlement of the conflict to a more advanced stage, and it became a kind of new affirmation of the process. The document provides a comprehensive approach — from military issues to confidence-building measures — and includes constitutional reform, which should be carried out in consultation with Donetsk and Luhansk.

There are also a number of other important elements, including amnesty for participants, the restoration of socioeconomic relations and humanitarian aspects. Now, thanks to resolution 2202 (2015), everything has been reinforced by the international authority of the Security Council, which in addition to the leaders of the Normandy quartet, has become a guarantor of the package of measures. The document is clear, both with regard to the sequence of the steps to be taken and the participants that must take those steps. In that regard, it is important to act in good faith and implement the steps without any attempt to rewrite them.

The Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) plays a crucial role in implementing the package of measures. It is tasked with observing the process, in accordance with the parameters prescribed in the document, in an impartial and coordinated way. If the special monitoring mission needs strengthening with more observers, equipment or financing, we are ready to consider that in a more constructive manner and in more detail in the framework of the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Vienna.

Being both realists and optimists, we are satisfied with the positive development of the situation on the ground. The ceasefire is generally holding. The withdrawal of heavy weapons has begun. One of the parties to the conflict, the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, has already completed that process. We hope that Kyiv will fall in line and finally withdraw its heavy equipment to the line of contact. We hope that this will help to foster a climate of trust, and that isolated violations of the ceasefire will cease. We also note the progress made in the exchange of prisoners.

At the same time, progress has stalled on a number of points. On 24 February in Paris, Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Normandy quartet called on the Trilateral Contact Group to immediately establish a working group to address the remaining aspects. Unfortunately, Ukrainian authorities refuse to do that and are dragging their feet. That is alarming and counterproductive. On 3 March, after having delayed for several months, President Poroshenko signed a decree establishing a constitutional commission, which will draft changes to the Constitution. However, the process is far from transparent. According to the package of measures, constitutional reform must be carried out in coordination with representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk. Otherwise, the deep-rooted causes of the Ukrainian crisis will not be dealt with.

A separate issue is the catastrophic socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in Donbas. The measures taken by Kyiv to suffocate the south-east have become a veritable blockade. Social benefits and pensions paid to Donbas residents have been cut off. Exiting and entering the area requires overcoming almost insurmountable bureaucratic obstacles. Convoys with humanitarian assistance and food are not reaching civilians, as confirmed by international organizations. Dozens of hospitals and schools have been destroyed. Kyiv recently ended the delivery of gas to Donbas.

Russia is undertaking extensive efforts to meet the urgent needs of the population of Donbas. It has already 17 sent convoys with humanitarian assistance. By the way, the most recent convoy, as well as some previous ones, was fully inspected by Ukrainian customs officials at the Donetsk checkpoint. I would ask Ambassador Power to take an interest in what her Embassies in Kyiv and Moscow are doing and in why they are not providing her with such basic information, instead giving her with disinformation on this topic and many other issues related to Ukraine.

Thanks to the humanitarian convoys approximately 30,000 people are being provided with food rations, 250 hospitals are receiving medical equipment and approximately 150 social service facilities have been reopened. Drinking water is being provided to 80 per cent of the population in the affected areas. We believe it is unfounded and cynically politicized to criticize us for sending those convoys. That criticism will in no way undermine our determination to help the people of Donbas.

The statistics about the 1 million internally displaced persons in the territory of Ukraine is well known. However, almost as many people — 950,000 people since April 2014 — have left Ukraine and stayed in Russia. Of them more than 650,000 have requested to be granted special status. We make no distinction as to whether those people come from the east or the west of Ukraine or as to what their political views are. We are making comprehensive efforts to welcome them and provide them housing and jobs. There are some 527 temporary accommodation sites throughout 76 regions of the Russian Federation where more than 27,000 people, including nearly 9,000 children, are currently residing. Those people are being provided with humanitarian, medical and psychological support.

In the medium term, the socioeconomic problems of Donbas cannot be resolved without implementing the provisions of the package of measures pertaining to the full re-establishment of relations with the rest of Ukraine, including the resumption of transfers of social benefits and pension payments and the functioning of the banking system. That work must begin without delay in the framework of the Contact Group.

We have heard dozens of times in this Chamber that the Ukrainian crisis can be resolved only through political means. Today the main work is being carried out in the Normandy and Minsk formats, which are making an important contribution to achieving results that give us hope for a solution. However, against the backdrop of positive steps, we are very worried about the continuing sabre-rattling by Kyiv — statements by President Poroshenko about the expansion of the army, the delivery of a new batch of tanks to the National Guard and the armed forces, trips by Kyiv officials around the world looking for weapons, and the drafting in the United States Congress of a law to provide

$1 billion for the equipping and training of Ukrainian forces.

According to data we have, in Lviv oblast these days some 300 military personnel from the United States have arrived to train Ukrainian soldiers in the use of foreign equipment. Everyone knows that wherever American military appear bad things can be expected to happen. I just want to recall, for instance, that when the Saakashvili regime attacked South Ossetia, there were 127 United States military advisers working in Georgia. The result was conflict, bloodshed and destruction. Only irresponsible politicians refuse to understand what this kind of a scenario could lead to in Ukraine.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman, Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović and Director Ging for their timely briefings today.

We share the briefers' grave concern at the situation in eastern Ukraine. This week the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reported that more than 6,000 people have been killed since April 2014. In that time, over 15,000 people have been wounded, and more than 1.5 million have fled their homes. It should trouble us all that these grim milestones have been met in less than one year and in spite of successive ceasefires.

Behind those statistics lies a worrying and escalating humanitarian crisis that has further undermined the human rights of all those living in eastern Ukraine. I can understand why the representative of Russia does not want to discuss the human rights situation in the country because the latest report by the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine details a growing level of violations and abuse, including reports of arbitrary arrests, summary executions, torture and enforced disappearances. The report details indiscriminate shelling of populated areas, including deliberate attacks by Russian-backed separatists on civilians being evacuated through Ukrainian-controlled routes, and it highlights the human cost of the fighting — overburdened centres for internally displaced persons, collapsing social services and a growing scarcity of food, water and heating.

The violence is having a disproportionate effect on the most vulnerable, with women, children and the elderly increasingly caught up in the fighting. Thousands remain trapped in volatile locations like Debaltseve. Hospitals, schools and kindergartens have been deliberately shelled, and disturbing reports of sexual violence are on the rise.

We call on both sides to respect international law, to ensure the safety and security of all in the region and to take active steps to ensure accountability for any violations and abuses of human rights. Sadly, investigations have been hindered by the separatists' refusal to grant access to the territory they control. We urge Russia to use its influence to overcome that situation.

More must also be done, as agreed in Minsk on 12 February, to ensure the exchange of all hostages and unlawfully detained persons who remain in captivity. That includes Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko, being held in solitary confinement, who has been on an extended hunger strike. Recent reports indicate that she has had to suspend her hunger strike after 83 days without food amid serious concerns for her health. As part of the agreement, Russia committed to releasing all prisoners, and yet Ms. Savchenko and many others remain in captivity. That is a clear violation of the Minsk agreements. I would like to ask the Russian representative here today to explain to the Security Council why Ms. Savchenko is still being held. I would also like to remind the Russian Federation authorities that while Ms. Savchenko remains in their custody they are fully responsible for her health and well-being.

One year on from the illegal annexation of Crimea, we must be clear in our condemnation today of what the United Nations describes as "systematic human rights violations affecting mostly Crimean Tatars and those who opposed the March 'referendum'". The report details arrests, arbitrary detention and deportation of Crimean Tatar activists, denying them their freedom of religion and belief, their right to free expression and their right to peaceful assembly. The continued denial of access to Crimea to the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities is of particular concern.

We must send a united message today on the issue of access. The Minsk agreement calls for the safe delivery of humanitarian aid to those in need. It calls for the OSCE to observe the withdrawal of heavy weapons, the border and the ceasefire. None of that can be achieved unless the Russian-backed separatists grant free and

unfettered access to the territory they control. We welcome Ukrainian President Poroshenko's statement this week that the OSCE will be granted access by the separatists to 10 locations in the east. I look forward to Russia's confirmation that it will be support this commitment and that it will use all its influence to improve access for humanitarian deliveries.

Russian so-called humanitarian convoys remain of grave concern. Some are clearly being used as cover for the delivery of military supplies. Russian military hardware remains in eastern Ukraine despite the agreement at Minsk to withdraw foreign military formations. The United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine details credible reports of

> "a continuing influx of heavy and sophisticated weaponry to armed groups in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as foreign fighters, including from the Russian Federation."

The OSCE reported on Wednesday that an 83-vehicle convoy crossed the border from Russia at Donetsk. The Ukrainian Government has made clear that it has not authorized such convoys. They are therefore a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and of international law.

Should Russia wish to support the humanitarian effort, I urge it to donate money to the United Nations aid programme. Unless Russia changes its approach, we will have no choice but to maintain sanctions and continue our condemnation of Russia's flagrant disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and the human rights of its people.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman, Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović and Mr. Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their briefings.

In recent days, the overall situation in eastern Ukraine has been stable, and the ceasefire has largely been maintained. Not long ago, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2202 (2015), reflecting the firm support of the international community for the diplomatic efforts of the leaders of the Russian Federation, France, Germany and Ukraine and for a political settlement of the question of Ukraine. The top priority now is for the parties concerned to continue to implement in a comprehensive manner the 12 February Minsk agreement reached by the leaders of the Russian Federation, France, Germany and Ukraine and advance the process of political settlement.

China is against any gross violation of human rights in Ukraine and any act that causes the deterioration of the humanitarian situation of the country. We also believe that a political solution is the only way to resolve the question of Ukraine.

The question of Ukraine involves multiple complex and interwoven historical and contemporary issues; a comprehensive long-term solution requires a full accommodation of the legitimate rights, interests and claims of the various regions and ethnic groups in Ukraine, addressing the legitimate concerns of the parties concerned and achieving a balance in the parties' interests. The international community should continue to increase diplomatic efforts to push for a political settlement of the crisis in Ukraine.

In terms of the Council's discussion on the question of Ukraine, China takes an open approach. We believe that the discussion should play a constructive role in easing tensions in the country. Moreover, the threat or use of unilateral sanctions all too often in international relations is not conducive to finding a fundamental solution.

Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries has been China's consistent position. China's position on the question of Ukraine has been objective and impartial.

We welcome and support the Minsk agreements reached by the leaders of the Russian Federation, France, Germany and Ukraine. We call on the parties concerned to continue to make efforts to ease the situation in eastern Ukraine, with a view to achieving peace, tranquility, stability and development in Ukraine. China is willing to continue to play a constructive role towards a political settlement of the question of Ukraine.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights and Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, for their comprehensive briefings.

The crisis in Ukraine has created an extremely difficult humanitarian situation for Ukrainians. Thousands have been forced from their homes and into exile in other areas. Furthermore, more than 1 million people in Ukraine are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. We are therefore compelled to achieve a positive, peaceful settlement that takes into account the interests of all parties puts an end to military actions. Those actions, in addition to other security challenges, continue to hamper the work of humanitarian organizations and stability in Ukraine.

Jordan is increasingly concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine, including the effects of the random shelling of civilian areas. In the current situation, the first priority must be the protection of civilians, mitigating their suffering through urgent measures to assist displaced persons and Ukrainian refugees and supporting basic services, particularly in the health sector, which has suffered enormously as a result of the crisis in Ukraine.

Furthermore, pressure must be brought to bear on the parties to the conflict, particularly the separatists, to compel them to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and human rights law and to cease all violations thereof. The current divisions among Ukrainians as a result of such violations and breaches may lead to a point of no return in the matter of Ukraine. That serves the interest of no party whatsoever and would have long-term negative effects on security and stability in the region.

Jordan appreciates the limited improvement in the security situation in eastern Ukraine and the ceasefire being respected in some regions. We stress the need for an end to all confrontation in eastern Ukraine. In that regard, we emphasize the need for all parties must uphold their responsibilities under the Minsk agreements and translate those agreements into facts on the ground.

My country underscores the importance of the ongoing meetings under the Normandy format in order to implement the agreements, including a full ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weaponry and the completion of prisoner exchanges, through cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the working groups to be set up by the Trilateral Contact Group. We consider it necessary to to make additional efforts at this crucial stage aimed at resolving the crisis in Ukraine, especially in the light of the building blocks available to make progress on a political solution.

Jordan supports the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other international humanitarian organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross. We call on all parties to lift all obstacles in order to ensure access by those organizations to the areas requiring assistance.

Furthermore, we urge support for the strategic response plan for 2015 set forth by OCHA to ensure humanitarian assistance to the people in need. We stress that such organizations will be unable to carry out their humanitarian work without proper political support from all of the parties to the conflict, in addition to the necessary international financial support for such assistance. We call on the Government of Ukraine to continue implementing the human rights strategy it has developed and to continue drafting the legislation necessary to protect all of its citizens.

In conclusion, Jordan believes that the current positive environment must be used to advantage, following last month's Minsk meeting. We must ensure the space for a comprehensive political solution in Ukraine that serve to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity and bring together all parts of Ukrainian society.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman for keeping us updated on the political situation in Ukraine. We also thank Mr. John Ging and Mr. Ivan Šimonović for their briefings on the humanitarian situation in the country.

I would like to begin by deploring the death of four demonstrators as the result of a remotely detonated device, on 22 February in Kharkiv. We hope that terrorism will not spread. Ukraine is a country that has already suffered greatly; it needs to rebuild a peaceful society in which its citizens will not have to fear for their lives or well-being. In that connection, we were pleased to hear that, since the signing of the Minsk agreements, there has been a decrease in tensions in Ukraine and progress has been achieved — for example, on prisoner exchanges between the parties.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to begin to speak of a political solution when we know that, since the ceasefire entered into force on 15 February, 60 Ukrainian

soldiers and an unknown number of separatists and civilians have died. Indeed, confrontations persist in some regions of the country. We once again urge the parties to fully implement the ceasefire.

According to the package of measures adopted on 12 February, the deadline for the withdrawal of heavy weaponry will expire tomorrow, 7 March. That process was developed with limited access by the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Chile believes that the process must be transparent and that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine must be given an inventory of the weapons in the country and full access to information on the withdrawal so that it can play its full role in monitoring the ceasefire and the arms stockpiles.

Despite those difficulties, it will be able to manage this phase without major setbacks, in accordance with the programme established in the package of measures, which should not interfere with the establishment of working groups and the finding of a political solution to the conflict. We are also concerned that access was not given to a United Nations rescue team following a methane explosion in a Donetsk mine. We stress the fact that access to humanitarian and emergency support must be unrestricted throughout the territory of Ukraine, and the authorities must ensure the protection of the entire Ukrainian population.

It is necessary to put a clear end to the confrontation so that the international community and the Government of Ukraine can concentrate their efforts and resources on dealing with the humanitarian and economic crisis. Ukraine will need all the help it can get in addressing the humanitarian crisis, which has left more than 1 million people displaced. The Government must find lasting solutions for the provision of housing, employment and social services and the integration of those people who, because of the conflict, will not be able to return to their places of origin. In that vein, we are pleased that the international community is supporting the Government's reform programme, and we hope that it will continue to support the implementation of the necessary changes.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank Mr. Feltman, Mr. Šimonović and Mr. Ging for their briefings and express my gratitude to the delegation of Lithuania for having called for this meeting. I would like to particularly thank Lithuania because Spain is very supportive of the Security Council's role in closely monitoring the implementation of the Minsk agreement on the basis of resolution 2202 (2015). All of us here agree that the conflict in Ukraine can be resolved only by political means. The Minsk accord, facilitated by Germany and France, to which the parties agreed and which was endorsed by the Security Council, can serve as a tool for us to achieve a solution. We need to support it in a decisive, and unanimous way.

A new high-level meeting of the participants in the Normandy format is convening today in Berlin, with Ambassadors Tagliavini and Apakan in attendance on behalf of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in order to continue providing assistance aimed at advancing the process. The Security Council should also support that process. Spain welcomes the progress achieved in the first few weeks after the entry into force of the ceasefire agreement, including the first steps in the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the exchange of prisoners.

However, progress remains weak and inadequate, as clearly described by Under-Secretary-General Feltman. I believe, as he does, that we really need to take advantage of this window of opportunity. We urge respect for the ceasefire, without exception and pursuant to the agreed conditions, and the implementation of the other provisions of the Minsk agreement in a uniform and condition-free manner. We also appeal to Russia to use all its influence to demand that the rebel groups immediately and strictly implement the agreements and thereby comply with its obligations as a signatory of the Minsk agreement. We also call on Ukraine to continue moving forward in fulfilling the obligations undertaken in Minsk, including the non-military aspects of the agreement.

We are concerned about the difficulties that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine continues to face in fulfilling the tasks entrusted to it under the agreement. We therefore urge the parties to work together with the Mission and to provide it forthwith with the full information it requires. In recent days, the Council has repeatedly expressed its support for the important role that the OSCE plays. I think that we must stress the importance of the agreement. Spain has proposed extending the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission and providing it with the necessary human and material resources.

We have heard with great concern the description of the humanitarian situation reported by Mr. Ging. Assistance to the population in need should be a top priority for everyone. We need to reject the politicization and exploitation of the situation. The effective distribution of humanitarian assistance should be a common goal that should be implemented in a coordinated way and not unilaterally. I appeal specifically to Russia to ensure the effective distribution of aid and the due observance of international law and the necessary restoration of trust between the parties and to coordinate its humanitarian assistance with the Ukrainian authorities and the competent international authorities. Spain suggests that we consider the possibility of setting up a specific mechanism that would make it possible, perhaps with the support of independent humanitarian actors, to facilitate and accelerate the delivery of aid to those in need with full respect for humanitarian principles.

We have also listened intently and with great concern to Mr. Šimonović's briefing. We again see the dramatic impact of the conflict in terms of its undermining human rights and international humanitarian law. That has been particularly severe since January in the areas under the control of rebel groups. On that point, I would like to express, as have other delegations, a special thought for Nadiya Savchenko, whose hunger strike is of great concern to us. We request that she be released immediately.

Also of particular concern is the description of the situation in the autonomous republic of Crimea. Its population, according to the report, is subject to systematic violations of its rights, especially those people who belong to the Tatar community. Spain would like to recall the content of General Assembly resolution 68/262. The report submitted by Mr. Šimonović recalls that the implementation of the laws of the Russian Federation in respect of the population of Crimea not only contravenes that resolution but also has certain implications that negatively impact human rights. Any lasting and sustainable solution must be based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman, Director John Ging of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Assistant Secretary-General Ivan Šimonović for their briefings illustrating the political and diplomatic developments aimed at putting an end to the conflict in Ukraine, as well as the situation on the ground, the ceasefire agreed to in Minsk, the dire humanitarian situation endured by the Ukrainians and the alarming human rights situation facing the country.

As a matter of principle, Angola supports the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and negotiations, strict adherence to the principles of international law, and respect for the sovereignty, independence, non-interference and territorial integrity of all States. Angola reiterates its full support for the implementation of the package of measures agreed to in Minsk on 12 February. We believe that a permanent ceasefire will allow for the overall implementation of the Minsk agreement and ultimately, the establishment of peace in Ukraine.

We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Ukraine, where over all, since the beginning of the conflict in mid-April 2014, almost 6,000 people have been killed and almost 15,000 wounded. We regret that over 1 million people are reported to be internally displaced. This is a situation that must stop and the Ukrainian people must be allowed to live with one another in peace and security.

We call once again on the parties to the conflict to respect the ceasefire and to implement speedily and in good faith the package of measures under the Minsk agreements. Having been endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 2202 (2015), the agreement carries special weight resulting from the Council's authority in matters pertaining to international peace and security. In addition, the agreements' endorsement by the Council's unanimous adoption of that resolution confers additional responsibilities on the Council and on the parties to the conflict to enforce the ceasefire and the Minsk agreements.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on presiding over the work of the Security Council during the month of March. You may count on the full cooperation of my delegation in the pursuit of the objectives inherent to the Council's work. We also thank the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ivan Šimonović, and the Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. John Ging, for their briefings.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela optimistically notes that the prospects for a political solution in Ukraine have continued to grow, especially following the adoption of resolution 2202 (2015) by the Security Council in support of the decision agreed by the representatives of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany on 12 February in Minsk. We underscore the need for the agreements to receive the support of the international community. We firmly hope that the parties will respect the ceasefire so that the agreements can be fully implemented.

We would like to express our concern regarding the more than 6,000 deaths, 14,740 wounded and 1 million internally displaced persons that have been reported, as well as the fragile situation in which civilians find themselves in the regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. We therefore reiterate the need for the parties strictly to observe what was agreed in Minsk on 12 February regarding the protection of civilians and to support a process addressing the humanitarian situation. We reiterate our rejection of violence, ethnic and political persecution, and any form of terrorist act, by whosoever committed and for whatsoever motivation. We call on the parties to refrain from actions that threaten the aspirations for peace and stability of the populations affected by the conflict.

Venezuela supports the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and welcomes the work being carried out by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to support the effective implementation of the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of heavy weaponry by the parties concerned, which has already begun, as stated Mr. Ertuğrul Apakan, head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine on 27 February.

Without a doubt, the human rights situation throughout the region is cause for concern. And while that is the focus of our discussion at this meeting, I cannot fail to stress the importance of seeking a political and diplomatic solution to the conflict. The Security Council must therefore support the effective implementation of resolution 2202 (2015) and the full implementation of the Minsk agreements of 12 February in an impartial and transparent manner and without ulterior motives.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): I thank Mr. Feltman, Mr. Ging and Mr. Šimonović for their excellent briefings, which only serve to emphasize that, if the Security Council is to perform its role of scrutinizing the situation in Ukraine, it must continue to receive regular and reliable information, such as that which we have just heard. We also compliment Lithuania for its initiative in requesting those briefings.

What we now know about the human rights situation in Ukraine is truly distressing, in particular the reports of severe violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the indiscriminate shelling of civilians, which New Zealand has previously condemned, and does so again today. Vulnerable populations are subject to grave abuses; they strive just to maintain a precarious existence, all the while seeking safety. We think, in particular, of the plight of the disabled, who are often overlooked in these situations. Moreover, today there are 1 million displaced persons in Ukraine; 12 months ago, there were none. There are 5 million in need of humanitarian relief; 12 months ago, there were none.

A sharp increase in casualties coincided with the dramatic escalation of hostilities of recent months, the only mitigating factor being that the worst reports generally predate the ceasefire recently agreed in Minsk. While there are indications that the situation has started to improve since that ceasefire, we as the Security Council must do everything possible to maintain that momentum. We must in particular address the gaps in information referred to by Under-Secretary-General Feltman, and we must, to use his words, make the process irreversible. We can only hope that the events of late 2014 and the early part of this year represent the lowest point of the humanitarian and human rights situation in Ukraine.

In the February open debate on the topic (see S/PV.7389), my Minister of Foreign Affairs raised New Zealand's concerns about the veto. We were not alone in that, with some Member States also mentioning paragraph 3 of Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations. Without repeating those comments, New Zealand emphasizes that, where parties to a conflict know that the Security Council is unable to act, there is much less incentive for compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law. We see the sad reality of that every day in Ukraine.

New Zealand urges those involved in this conflict to deliver on their Minsk commitments, not least with a genuine and comprehensive ceasefire. Until that has been achieved, the humanitarian crisis and the violations

that have been described to us today will persist, more people will suffer, more blood will be shed, and more lives will be lost. Under international human rights law, all parties have an obligation to ensure that civilians are protected. Where civilians seek to escape conflict areas so as to get to safety, they must be allowed to do so, not be trapped as Assistant Secretary-General Šimonović described to us, and certainly not threatened by separatist artillery. Humanitarian aid must reach the affected populations. All involved must do everything within their power to ensure its delivery without let or hindrance. International norms on the protection of humanitarian actors must also be respected.

As we have just heard that the situation for ordinary people in Ukraine remains very dangerous indeed. The observation of the ceasefire remains imperfect. Significant civilian populations remain at very high risk. Much is needed to ensure their safety and to protect them from human-rights violations. New Zealand reiterates the Security Council's recent unanimous call for the full implementation of the Minsk package, including a comprehensive ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons. All of this must be monitored and verified by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We also call once again on Russia, as a party to the Minsk agreements on the ceasefire and with indisputable influence in this matter, to ensure that the separatists honour that which has been agreed. Those are the essential steps on the path to a long-term political solution and to the restoration of peace in Ukraine, and, as such, they must be delivered.

Mr. Gombo (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I thank Lithuania for taking the initiative to hold this debate on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. I would also like to thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; Mr. John Ging, Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; and Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, for their briefings.

Chad is very concerned about the grave security and humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine, despite the recent calm that has prevailed following the signing of the 12 February agreements.

The fighting and blind bombings between the Government and the separatist groups have primarily affected the civilian population. The report on human rights in Ukraine covering the period from 1 December 2013 to 15 February 2014 states that 1,012 people were killed and 3,793 injured in the fighting in eastern Ukraine. In total, from April 2014 to February 2015, the conflict has caused 6,000 deaths, including 375 women and 63 children, and over 14,000 injured, including 650 women and 150 children. The conflict has also resulted in over a million internally displaced persons and refugees, including thousands of vulnerable people, in particular elderly and handicapped persons found in the combat zones without access to humanitarian aid. In addition, there has been a massive destruction of public and private infrastructure, including schools, health centres and homes.

It is a heavy toll, and the humanitarian situation highlights the responsibility of political actors and leaders to find lasting solutions for the affected populations. Such solutions must include the implementation of the Minsk agreements, including the ceasefire, the prohibition on the use of heavy weaponry and other relevant provisions of the agreements. Priority should be given to free and unhindered access to conflict areas in order to allow for the quick and non-discriminatory delivery of necessary humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons; the strengthening of evacuation measures; lasting solutions to the issues of shelter, jobs and integration for refugees; and the release of all persons detained illegally or arbitrarily; and the identification of effective measures to counter violence against women, guarantee the freedom and security of the media and put in place educational measures to allow students to pursue their studies.

Finally, the implementation of such measures must be carried out with respect for international norms and the recommendations contained in the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and in line with General Assembly resolution 68/262 on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I thank you for convening this meeting, Mr. President. We wish to thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Mr. John Ging and Mr. Ivan Šimonović for their respective briefings.

At the outset, Malaysia would like to express its sincere condolences to the families of the victims of the coal mine accident in Zasyadko in eastern Ukraine. The incident, which resulted in dozens of casualties, has further exacerbated the already grim situation in the

Donetsk region. We call on the parties to the conflict to give full cooperation to the relevant authorities for the rescue and recovery effort.

As is normally the case, the civilian population bears the biggest brunt and pays the highest price in any conflict. The Ukraine crisis is no exception. In a matter of one year, Ukraine went from being a country without a single displaced person to one having over 1 million of its people displaced from eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Of the 1 million, 1 in 3 internally displaced people in Ukraine is a child. Currently, an estimated 5 million people in eastern Ukraine are in need of humanitarian assistance. Over 6,000 people have been killed in the conflict, including the 298 passengers on flight MH-17, a tragic incident that was a direct consequence of the Ukraine conflict.

Malaysia condemns indiscriminate attacks against civilians in the strongest terms. We are alarmed to learn that attacks that seem to intentionally target civilians in residential areas have further intensified in recent months, including in Volnovakha, Mariupol and the city of Donetsk. As reported by the human rights mission in Ukraine, the fighting and indiscriminate shelling have severely damaged civilian property and vital infrastructure, leaving civilians without electricity, gas, heating, water or food. We also condemn the attacks against hospitals, schools and kindergartens, carried out in stark disregard for international humanitarian law and civilians' lives. We repeat our call for an independent investigation into those incidents, so as to bring those responsible for gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian law to justice.

Malaysia is deeply concerned by the allegations of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in Ukraine. Reports of the arbitrary detentions of civilians, torture and enforced disappearances committed against both sides of the conflict must be investigated to prevent impunity. We regret the lack of progress in ensuring accountability for the grave human rights violations, such as those that occurred during the Maidan protest in Kyiv and Odessa last year.

We deplore the attacks against journalists in Ukraine, particularly in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Over the past year, at least 78 journalists have been held by armed groups, and at least 60 attacks were carried out against media offices. We call on the parties to respect the right to the freedoms of opinion, expression and peaceful assembly. We also view with concern the targeting of religious minorities in the areas controlled by armed groups, as reported by the human rights mission in Ukraine.

Since the ceasefire went into effect on 15 February 2015, fighting has generally decreased in the Donbas region. We also welcome the progress made in the withdrawal of heavy weapons on both sides. At this point, however, the ceasefire remains fragile, and the progress made thus far is far from irreversible. We urge the parties to the conflict not to miss the opportunity for peace once again and to ensure full compliance with the provisions of the Minsk agreements. We also call on both sides to cooperate fully with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine so as to enable the mission to carry out its mandate, including to monitor and verify the ceasefire and the heavy weapons withdrawals.

Malaysia commends the tireless efforts and commitment on the part of various organizations, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to provide humanitarian assistance to those affected by the Ukraine crisis. With the ceasefire in effect, we hope attention can now be focused on intensifying humanitarian assistance in an environment that would ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel. We urge all parties to allow safe and unrestricted humanitarian access and to remove bureaucratic impediments that could create barriers to deliveries of immediate and effective humanitarian aid. We reiterate our position that humanitarian assistance must be carried out in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law and respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In conclusion, we wish to reflect on the priority task facing the Chairperson of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is to rebuild trust and confidence in Europe, in particular in view of the worst crisis the region has faced since the end of the Cold War. We believe that the Minsk agreements provide an excellent opportunity for the parties in conflict to take a step back from the spiralling violence in Ukraine and recommit themselves to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Full adherence to the Minsk agreements by both sides would constitute a first step towards the rebuilding of trust and confidence, hopefully leading to a sustainable political solution to the conflict.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): I to would like to thank Mr. Feltman, Mr. Šimonović and Mr. Ging for their briefings this morning.

Nigeria notes that the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine is holding, although the situation remains tenuous and precarious. The Minsk agreements provide the basis for a long-term resolution of the crisis in Ukraine. They should therefore be respected and not be undermined by acts that run counter to its provisions. The human rights of all peoples must be respected. Humanitarian assistance must reach all those in need without discrimination.

Nigeria urges all sides in Ukraine to refrain from acts that may threaten the ceasefire and erode the gains made in de-escalating the conflict. The ceasefire is a critical confidence-building measure, an important first step towards the implementation of the political, economic and governance aspects of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. In our view, the agreements represent a comprehensive framework for a political solution that will hopefully return Ukraine to a state of normalcy and peace and ensure the respect for its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

I would like to thank Mr. Feltman, Mr. Šimonović and Mr. Ging for their briefings. Their presentations have helped to provide valuable insight into the overall situation in Ukraine.

The Security Council, through its resolution 2202 (2015), has brought all its weight to bear on the efforts to end the crisis that is the subject of the Minsk agreements, which the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is in charge of implementing. After having heard the representative of the OSCE last week (see S/PV.7391), it seems useful for the Council to have information for evaluating the overall situation. All aspects are relevant for efforts to support the crisis resolution process initiated in Minsk, which is the priority for all of us. In that regard, it is important to remember that the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements devotes an entire paragraph to humanitarian issues: The signatories have committed to ensuring

> "safe access, delivery, storage, and distribution of humanitarian assistance to those in need, on the basis of an international mechanism" (*resolution 2202 (2015), annex I, para. 7*).

The human rights situation in Ukraine has continued to deteriorate in recent months. Here in the Council in mid-November (see S/PV.7311), we denounced the arrival from abroad of reinforcements in terms of weapons and fighters in support of the separatists, which fuelled a new wave of violence that peaked in early February 2015. Mr. Šimonović's report is illuminating on that issue. Nearly 6,000 people have died since the beginning of the crisis in April 2014, including the 298 passengers on the Malaysian Airlines flight.

Civilians have been the main victims of this escalation. I note in particular, and with horror, the ongoing bombing of the evacuation corridors used by people fleeing the combat zones, which has endangered the evacuation operations organized by the Ukrainian Government. Thousands of civilians, such as those in the city of Debaltseve, have found themselves trapped in combat zones.

This conflagration has also given rise to an increase in the number of human rights violations, including acts of torture, summary executions and abductions. International standards have been violated by all parties to the conflict. The east of the country, which is controlled mainly by the separatists, has been turned into a zone of lawlessness. Accordingly, the report emphasizes the importance seeing the perpetrators of those crimes, including most serious crimes, found and brought to justice.

In that context, the humanitarian situation requires the attention of all. The response must be coordinated. The precarious conditions in which people live in eastern Ukraine do not justify Russia's open violations of the sovereignty of the country by bringing in so-called humanitarian convoys without notice, which are only partially monitored by the Ukrainian authorities.

Finally, we remain particularly concerned about the situation of the population of Crimea under the de facto yoke of Russian law. Mr. Šimonović's report describes a situation of arbitrariness and legal uncertainty, where civilians, especially the Tatars, experience regular violations of their human rights and are criminally charged under the Russian justice system for events

that took place prior to the illegal annexation of the territory.

With the signing on 12 February of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements, a new dynamic has emerged. The ceasefire that entered into force on 15 February is now generally respected, although it remains fragile. It has helped to reduce the overall level of violence. De-escalation has been observed on the ground, and the beginning of the withdrawal of heavy weapons extends this dynamic. It is the OSCE's responsibility to verify the withdrawal, as provided for in paragraph 3 of the Minsk package of measures. Other measures relating to human rights and the humanitarian situation must now be encouraged. In that respect, two points would establish confidence.

First, with regard to all the hostages and illegally detained persons, the Minsk agreements provide for their release and exchange on the basis of the principle of "all against all". In that regard, we call on Russia to stop holding people wrongfully detained in its territory, particularly Nadiya Savchenko. Her release would strengthen the first encouraging exchanges of prisoners that have been taking place since 12 February, including 138 Ukrainian soldiers and 52 separatist fighters on 21 February.

Secondly, progress must be made quickly in the coordination of humanitarian assistance, as provided for in paragraph 7 of the Minsk package of measures. All parties to the conflict must guarantee access for international humanitarian assistance to all areas. We welcome the announcement by the Ukrainian Government of the creation of a platform for discussions between Ukrainian officials and representatives of the humanitarian community.

In addition, we support the proposals of Ms. Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine, to create a working group that would work to resolve all humanitarian, economic and rehabilitation issues. That group would cover the many outstanding issues: the voluntary return of internally displaced persons and refugees, the reconstruction of housing, food and medical aid, the provision to civilians of food, clothing, schools, and so on. The efforts of all sides will be needed in that regard.

To give substance to the Minsk agreements, all parties must respect all of the points. Full and unconditional access and the security of the OSCE observers, as well as the transmission of information, especially to confirm the withdrawal of heavy weapons, must imperatively be guaranteed by all parties. We expect Russia to encourage the separatist elements to fully implement the commitments they made in Minsk.

In addition, all parties must courageously address all of the political points of the road map drawn up in Minsk to advance towards a comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the crisis. Progress will be possible when all parties are willing to move forward. The Council may be assured of the resolute and continued commitment of France with its partners in the Normandy format and in the framework of the Council to continue on the difficult and demanding path of peace.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting to discuss the current situation in Ukraine. It is our hope that under your presidency the Ukraine issue will progress further towards a resolution. I thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Mr. Ivan Šimonović and Mr. John Ging for their important and timely briefings. Unfortunately, the facts mentioned today show that the Minsk agreements of 12 February this year, and of 5 and 19 September of last year, have not been implemented in full.

The armed and pro-Russian groups are continuing their attacks on positions and control centres of the Ukrainian armed forces, as well as on civilian residences. Since the ceasefire of 15 February, the militants have carried out over 750 attacks. As a result, the Ukrainian armed forces have lost 64 soldiers and 341 have been wounded. On the last day alone, terrorists attacked positions of the Ukrainian military 58 times. Since the launching of the anti-terrorist operation last year, 1,541 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed and 6,226 wounded.

The Russian side and pro-Russian separatists launched an offensive on the city of Debaltseve, which has already become a symbol of Russia's flagrant violation of international humanitarian and human rights law. As Ambassador Apakan, head of the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), informed the Council last Friday,

> "This was an attempt to create new facts on the ground, and so to change the basis on which the latest package of measures had been agreed. These attacks were against the letter and the spirit of the Minsk agreements." (*S/PV.7395, p.3*)

After Debaltseve, Mariupol is the most likely target of an attack. Furthermore, with the start of the ceasefire, the self-proclaimed leaders of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic demonstrated their reluctance to create conditions that would allow the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to effectively monitor and verify the ceasefire regime and the withdrawal of heavy weapons.

For our part, we remain fully committed to the implementation of the Minsk agreements, including those reached in September 2014. We believe that they remain the road map for seeking a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Ukrainian armed forces have strictly followed the order issued by the President of Ukraine to implement the ceasefire as of 15 February. Ukraine has continued to withdraw its heavy weapons from the line of contact. At the present time, 150-millimetre artillery weapons have already been removed from the line of contact. Grad missile operations were halted yesterday and the Uragan systems are withdrawing today.

That step was carried out under OSCE monitoring and verification. But the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the Donbas by the Ukrainian Army and the Russian-backed fighters should be carried out simultaneously. Moreover, it must be precisely coordinated and monitored by the OSCE. Ukraine is committed to continuing to provide all necessary assistance to the OSCE in Ukraine in that regard. We once again call on the Russian Federation and the Russian-backed mercenaries to immediately fulfil their obligations under the Minsk agreements and Security Council resolution 2202 (2015). We demand that the Russian Federation influence its agents in eastern Ukraine to guarantee all of the conditions necessary for the OSCE to fulfil its duties in the field.

We find it difficult to trust the words of the Russian side; they have made so many statements. We have lost confidence even in their actions, because there has been no real action; only the pretence of such. We await the outcome of the implementation of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements of September 2014 and of February 2015.

(*spoke in English*)

The latest report of the Human Rights Mission in Ukraine presented today by Mr. Šimonović dismisses any internal human rights pretext for the ongoing external aggression in Ukraine. On the contrary, it clearly indicates a continuing flow of heavy weaponry and foreign fighters from the Russian Federation into the areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions controlled by illegal armed groups. It is crystal clear that an immediate end to the Russian aggression in the Donbas and the occupation of the Crimea is an indispensable precondition for ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Crimea and the Donbas regions in eastern Ukraine. At the same time, Ukraine is doing its best to take forward a human-rights agenda, including through developing a National Human Rights Strategy, which envisages elaborating a National Action Plan for Human Rights.

By any standard, Russia's detention and ill-treatment of Ms. Nadiya Savchenko constitute a grave violation of human rights. We remind the Russian side that at the Normandy format summit in Minsk on 12 February it was agreed that all hostages and illegally detained persons must be released within 19 days. The agreed measure fully covers the case of Nadiya Savchenko. We call on Russia to honour its commitments by immediately releasing Savchenko and all other Ukrainian hostages.

My delegation is grateful to numerous States and organizations for their clear and strong statements in support of the immediate freeing of Savchenko. We reiterate our protest against the continued attempts by Russian authorities to fabricate new trumped-up charges against other Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia, among whom are Oleg Sentsov and Oleksandr Kolchenko.

A year ago Russia launched its full-fledged aggression against Ukraine. There is no need to remind members of the Council how the occupation and annexation of Crimea was conducted. What is the human rights situation in that occupied territory at the moment? The implementation of Russian laws, which contravenes General Assembly resolution 68/262, has had serious human rights implications. We have witnessed the arrests and detentions of Crimean Tatar activists on totalitarian charges relating to the demonstrations and activities of their civil society organizations, and media outlets are being disrupted

on the false grounds of preventing so-called extremist activities. The arrests, prosecutions and deportations of Crimean Tatar leaders, including People's Deputy of Ukraine Mustafa Dzhemilev, the Chairman of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Refat Chubarov, and his Deputy, Ahtem Ciygoz, are politically motivated. Over 10,000 have been forced to leave Crimea for mainland Ukraine. It has been the most serious blow to the Crimean Tatars since the Stalinist deportation.

Those and other outrageous acts must be immediately dealt with by the Council. Under no circumstances can the United Nations accept that Russia has turned Crimea into an isolated military camp and its residents into recluses. We encourage the United Nations to be more persistent in ensuring the implementation of international human-rights treaties and the recommendations of the Human Rights Mission in Ukraine by Russia and the administration installed in Crimea by the occupying Power. They must also allow access by missions of international organizations to the peninsula seeking to monitor the observance of human rights.

More than 6,000 deaths, many thousands of injured people and over one million internally displaced persons — that is the human toll that Ukraine is paying for Russia's intervention. The Ukrainian Government is doing its best to cope with the unfolding humanitarian crisis. We appreciate the United Nations humanitarian efforts, namely, the launch last week, jointly with the Government, of the 2015 humanitarian response plan. The Government of Ukraine devotes great attention to the people who now live in areas temporarily uncontrolled by the Ukrainian authorities. The Ukrainian Government has done everything possible, from supplying gas and electricity to providing humanitarian assistance. Russian-backed militants impede, through shelling and other threats, the efforts of Ukrainian personnel to repair gas pipelines and electricity lines. As for the Ukrainian Government's humanitarian assistance, most of it has not, to date, reached non-Government controlled territories, owing to the refusal of the Russian-backed terrorists to provide safe and unhindered access for humanitarian deliveries and personnel. On 4 February, there was an unfortunate explosion at one of the biggest mines in Donetsk. Our special rescue team was just 45 kilometres away from the mine, and the Ukrainian Government immediately offered to send it there to help extract the miners from below ground. The separatists senselessly and mercilessly refused to let the team in.

For its part, the Russian side continues to send so-called humanitarian convoys without the involvement of the International Committee of the Red Cross and fully excluding the Ukrainian side. What the Russian delegation stated today on the issue of the humanitarian convoys is nothing but an attempt to misinform the international community and the Security Council. I should like to remind the Council that it is not only a serious violation of international and national law; it is a crime.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, a year ago, Russia became like a blind painter who has decided to recolour the international landscape according to his own taste. That is why a series of black marks have appeared, blackening the reputation of the Charter of the United Nations. That black paint was applied by Russia's hand alone. What remains for us to do is to try to remove those black marks on the Council and everywhere else. I would like to thank all members of the Security Council for their support to Ukraine.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the Russian Federation has requested the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I want to say a few words. First, I wish to make a brief comment on Crimea, even though I said earlier that we were not going to discuss Crimea in the Security Council, I will give just one figure — 93 per cent. In a recent opinion poll conducted by a German institute, 93 per cent of the inhabitants of Crimea spoke in favour of reunification with Russia and again confirmed their support for that historic act. We do not need to prove anything to anyone. In regard to the concern that our Ukrainian colleague has expressed for the inhabitants of Crimea, I recall that the Kyiv authorities did everything they could to complicate the lives of the inhabitants of Crimea when they blocked water supplies, electricity and access. The latest news is that they could not find anything better to do than to plant landmines. They put 450 boxes of explosives under a bridge used by local inhabitants to move from Crimea to mainland Ukraine. That is the kind of humanitarianism that the Ukrainian authorities present in its best version. So we will not even discuss this further.

As for my Ukrainian colleague's description of the situation regarding the implementation of the package of measures related to resolution 2202 (2015), his

version is very one-sided. I just want to ask everyone in the Chamber to read the report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Special Monitoring Mission, which is, generally speaking, objective. It is important to withdraw weapons so that the firing will cease. The representatives of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic began withdrawing weapons first, and were the first to finish the process. The Ukrainian authorities did everything they could to delay it, but finally, as the Ukrainian representative said, President Poroshenko gave an order not to fire and that order is allegedly being carried out. However, we recall that in August President Poroshenko solemnly promised not to bombard cities, following which cities were bombarded for several consecutive months. But I repeat, I want to be an optimist, so let us hope that the positive developments that we are seeing implemented in the package of measures will be further continued.

I also want to comment on another matter that does not fall within the purview of the Security Council, because it has been raised several times. I am talking about Nadiya Savchenko. I never cease to be surprised at how ill-informed some colleagues in the Security Council are. The representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Lyall Grant, asked me a question: Why was Nadiya Savchenko arrested? Has he not read newspapers? She is accused of involvement in the killing of two Russian journalists. That is a very serious accusation. We keep on talking about the fact that we need to protect journalists and that there should be no impunity. She has been accused of that crime. Her detention is in no way illegal, because it was confirmed by our court under our legislation. By the way, the European Court of Human Rights refused to implement rule 39 of the regulations of the Court in this case, which confirms the legality of the detention of this individual.

It has been very strange to hear demands from the representative of the United States to release Savchenko. The American system of jurisprudence and the penitentiary system have never been known for its humanism. In Guantánamo, the United States has held people for over 10 years without even making formal accusations. The prisoners try to commit suicide and go on hunger strikes. They are force-fed, and that is considered normal. I will not even mention that the United States has gotten into the habit of abducting Russian individuals throughout the world, accusing them of things invented, sometimes through provocations by their intelligence services at the end of nowhere, detaining them in subhuman conditions, holding show trials on the territory of the United States, giving them enormously long sentences, subjecting them to constant psychological torture and holding them under trying circumstances. I can assure colleagues that if Nadiya Savchenko were being held in such conditions in the United States, her fate would be predetermined. She would never see the light of day ever.

With regard to our investigation and prosecution, our position is that the investigation and trial will determine whether or not she is guilty. It is not clear on what basis Mr. Šimonović uses his position in the United Nations to make an appeal for the release of Ms. Savchenko. We think that Mr. Šimonović is violating Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, which requires high-level professionalism, good faith and impartiality of United Nations staff in fulfilling their functions. If Mr. Šimonović wants to change his place of work, he will be able to fulfil his potential in the journalistic sphere, but in the Council let us stick to what representatives of the United Nations are supposed to do.

In conclusion, I have to note, regretfully, that our discussion has been gloomier than it should have been in the light of the initial steps taken in implementing resolution 2202 (2015) and the package of measures agreed to on 12 February. Nevertheless, I express the hope that members of the Security Council will, in good faith, seek to contribute to the further advancement of the process of political resolution in Ukraine.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the United States has requested the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): The challenge posed by these back-and-forth statements is that Russia no longer has any credibility whatsoever. None. Russian representatives months ago, at one of the first of the 32 meetings so far on this topic, said that Russia had no soldiers, no heavy weapons and no presence in Crimea. Later, they not only acknowledged having a Russian presence in Crimea but announced the annexation of Crimea — an annexation made possible with the use of military force, the use of Russian military forces. The pretence ends; then the facts retrospectively change.

Russia said not long ago that it would observe the ceasefire agreed upon in the package of measures

to implement the September Minsk agreements. Oops — that was until Debaltseve became a target for Russia and the separatists. Now Russia says that Debaltseve is part of the territory controlled by the separatists, even though it was not during the time that the package of measures was agreed upon.

Today, Russia has made the claim that the separatists have complied with the Minsk agreement in withdrawing their heavy weapons. Yet, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe cannot get access to the heavy weapons, so we are told to rely upon Russian claims about what the fate of those heavy weapons is — heavy weapons that Russia has provided to the separatists. These heavy weapons do not just fall from the sky. These are massive weapons systems, used to shoot down planes and bombard civilian centres, such that 500 people are killed, left in their basements to die and be discovered by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The information that the United States has provided over time to the Security Council has, unfortunately, proven accurate. And indeed the facts on the ground regarding what Russia has absorbed into its current territorial claims are the facts that we have described, day in and day out, at every one of these meetings. In contrast, the claims that Russia makes in the Council give way to new claims at subsequent meetings, but the facts on the ground contradict the prior claims, and the same will be true with regard to the claims that have been made today.

The facts on the ground — which are really all that matter and all that anyone in this Chamber cares about — show Russian aggression, Russia having lopped off part of someone else's country and trying to keep it. The only way that we have a chance of getting to peace in Minsk is if Russia leaves Ukraine and takes its heavy weapons with it.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): Perhaps I could just respond to my Russian colleague as he cited my question specifically. It was unfortunate that he left the Chamber before I actually spoke and perhaps it was mistranslated on the television that he was watching. The question I asked was not why Ms. Nadiya Savchenko had been arrested. I asked why she was still being held, given that Russia had agreed that there would be a full exchange of prisoners as part of the Minsk agreements.

In terms of the facts on which he thought that I was not well-versed, perhaps I can share with colleagues some of the facts of Nadiya Savchenko's arrest. She was actually captured on 17 June 2014 by the Donbas People's Militia inside eastern Ukraine. She was then taken to Russia, where she was charged with involvement in a mortar attack in Ukraine, which killed two Russian State television journalists — an attack which occurred after she had been detained. Then, in addition, in January 2015, Russian investigators said that they had opened a new criminal case against Ms. Savchenko for illegally crossing the border into Russia, which is pretty rich given that she was detained inside eastern Ukraine and then taking forcibly into Russia in the first place.

Those are the facts of this case. The question I asked my Russian colleague, and I repeat it, is why is she still being held when there was an agreement in the Minsk agreements of 12 February that all prisoners would be released?

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, with regard to Ms. Savchenko, an investigation is under way. Accusations have been made and there is a legal procedure under way. In Ukraine, there are many people being detained and held prisoner who are not subject to any legal procedure. The provision of the Minsk agreements with regard to prisoner exchange applies to them. In this case, there is a legal procedure that cannot simply be disregarded.

With regard to the response of Ms. Power, of course she exaggerated greatly with regard to the discussions we have had here in the Security Council since the beginning of the crisis. Let me explain two things that we have discussed, since she brought them up.

When the Minsk agreements were signed on 12 February, it was clear — and we said this very clearly and unequivocally — that before a ceasefire could take effect in the area of Debaltseve, it would be necessary to resolve the issue regarding the withdrawal of Ukrainian soldiers who had been surrounded in that region. The insurgents proposed that they withdraw, and then a ceasefire would have immediately taken effect. Unfortunately, they were given conflicting

orders to break their encirclement. Of course, under such conditions it was very difficult to expect that an immediate ceasefire would take effect. Therefore, for anyone who familiar with the details of this discussion, the situation regarding Debaltseve could not have been a surprise.

As to the last point Ambassador Power raised regarding the location of weapons, this is closely linked to the work of the Special Monitoring Mission, as discussed in the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. But the Mission must do what is defined by the package of measures; it must monitor the areas from which weapons are withdrawn. It says nothing about a requirement as to where they were subsequently moved, how they were moved or where they have been stored. As a measure of good faith, the representative of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics did provide such information to the Mission, but I do not know if similar information was provided by the Kyiv authorities.

But our goal is to focus on the tasks to be carried out according to the package of measures, rather than try to add yet further conditions. The task is to determine whether heavy weapons remain in the region from which they are supposed to have been withdrawn. If they do not, then the obligation has been fulfilled. Where they have been taken to or are stockpiled is a secondary matter. There are no grounds to ask such questions of the Special Monitoring Mission. But, again on the basis of good faith, some additional information has been provided by the insurgents.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I would like to make a general observation. Listening to the Russian delegation since last year and here again today, I must repeat what I have been saying since last March. Russia is an arsonist who is trying to play the role of the fire safety inspector. As long as it seek to play such a role, no constructive dialogue will be possible.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of Ukraine would be well advised to choose his words more wisely. Ukraine is a neighbour of Russia, and we are trying to find a solution to the crisis. Therefore Ms. Power should be asked who is an arsonist there — she is laughing now — and what she, together with Mr. Parubiy, set on fire on the Maidan. She could shed some light on that question if she knows the details about the arsonists.

I have one last point, which is connected to the comments made earlier by Ms. Power. People keep talking about Russia as though there were no one in eastern Ukraine trying to fight for their rights. Even if the figures mentioned pertaining to Russian interference were all correct, the fact is that tens of thousands of people have taken up arms to defend their rights in eastern Ukraine. Russia could not force anyone to do that. It would be impossible. Unfortunately, many simply do not wish to see the real situation in eastern Ukraine. That is why the crisis has dragged on.

My Ukrainian colleague said something about artists. In Washington, D.C., they painted for them a very simple picture of who should be toppled and how. There was no need to use paint; a simple pencil sketch was enough. Using that rough pencil sketch, they tried to resolve the political problems of Ukraine. And now we are seeing the results. Now military advisers are being called for. At present Saakashvili is an adviser to the President, and there are 300 advisers. We saw a similar scenario in Georgia in 2008. If that path is chosen, while using colourful words about the role of Russia, this will end very sadly for Ukraine — even more sadly then the events we have seen over the past year.

We would like to avoid that because there are finally signs that the situation can be resolved. There is a package of measures, both military and political, that should be strictly implemented. We should not say, as some have today, that we must first deal with all the military aspects, then deal with the political ones. No, we need to deal with those aspects in parallel, because the range of issues that need to be resolved before the end of the year in accordance with the package is very broad. So we should not lose track of the essence of the issue. We should focus on all the different measures in the package.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the United States of America has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I realize we are taxing the patience of the rest of the Council, so I will be very brief. The Russian representative has several times used the expression "good faith" — as in, we do this or that "in good faith". That is absurd in this context.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7401

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7401st meeting

Friday, 6 March 2015, 12.40 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 25 February 2015 from the Secretary-general addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/138)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-06194 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 25 February 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/138)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden to participate in the meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/161, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/138, which contains a letter dated 25 February 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

Abstaining:

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 14 votes in favour and one abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 2209 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela abstained in the voting on resolution 2209 (2015) on chemical weapons in Syria because it believes that it prejudges the investigative process being conducted by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), linking the use of chlorine gas as a chemical weapon in the conflict taking place in that country.

In that respect, we consider it necessary, prior to the adoption of a resolution such as that on which we have abstained, to conclude the investigation to determine who is responsible for such an abominable act, above all given the fact that Syria has been a victim of the barbarism of terrorist groups that have moved into that country with the goal of sowing hatred, intolerance and violence, and that enjoy major military capacities.

Venezuela condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere in the world, whatever the circumstances or motives, since their use constitutes a war crime. In that regard, we attach great importance to the information provided by the OPCW that all of the chemical weapons declared on the part of Syria have been removed from its territory. That demonstrates the will and commitment of the Syrian authorities to strictly observe the provisions of resolution 2118 (2013) and of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. The information presented by the OCPW on the removal of chemical weapons is evidence that Syria has fully complied with the provisions of resolution 2118 (2013).

We reiterate our call for a peaceful resolution of the conflict among all parties, in conformity with Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. We affirm our full support for the diplomatic efforts of Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, to achieve a firm and lasting peace with the full participation of all sectors of Syrian society. We wish

to responsibly call attention to the fact that resolution 2209 (2015), on which we abstained in the voting, opens a dangerous path to the use of force, which could jeopardize the dialogue process based on the Moscow, Cairo and United Nations initiatives with a view to peacefully ending the conflict.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 2209 (2015), in connection with the reports of the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) regarding the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic (S/2015/138, annex). In that regard, we were guided by our principled position on the unacceptability of the use of chemical weapons by anyone. We also took into account the need for the Security Council to maintain a unified position regarding the Syrian chemical weapons dossier, as embodied in resolution 2118 (2013).

We stress that further activity of the OPCW fact-finding mission should be based on professionalism, objectivity and impartiality. Any conclusions on the facts related to the use of chemical weapons should be based on sound proof. To that end, we should strictly observe the provisions of the General Assembly's resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW, which envisions that cases of particular gravity and urgency shall be brought directly to the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council by the OPCW Executive Council, by way of the Secretary-General, in accordance with existing procedures.

In future, we will strictly base our position on the fact that only the guiding bodies of the OPCW may confirm the facts of alleged violations of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and resolution 2118 (2013). That approach is envisaged both in the Convention and in the communiqué on the Syrian chemical weapons programme agreed upon by the United States and the Russian Federation on 14 September 2013 in Geneva.

We wish to once again state categorically that we do not accept the possible use of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations without an attempt to confirm any allegations based on proof.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China voted in favour of resolution 2209 (2015). China's position on chemical weapons is clear and consistent. We resolutely oppose the use of chemical weapons by anyone in any circumstances, and support the concerted efforts of all relevant parties to fully implement the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Security Council concerning Syrian chemical weapons. In that process, the authority of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW must be maintained. The Security Council should remain united and always speak with a unanimous voice, which is important in achieving success in the Council's relevant work.

On the basis of this position, China actively participated in the consultations on resolution 2209 (2015) and vigorously pushed for consensus among the relevant parties. We hope that the relevant parties will implement resolution 2209 (2015) in an earnest, comprehensive and precise manner. Any further actions taken by the Council on the Syrian chemical weapons issue should be separately discussed and decided upon by Council members. We hope that resolution 2209 (2015) will help to fostering further Council consensus on the Syrian chemical weapons, facilitate the early completion of the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, and provide new impetus for a political settlement of the Syrian issue.

China will continue to play its active and constructive role towards a comprehensive, lasting and appropriate solution of the Syrian issue.

Ms. Power (United States of America): We have adopted resolution 2209 (2015) today, a year and a half after the Council adopted a binding resolution in the wake of a horrific, gruesome chemical weapons attack that left more than 1,000 civilians and hundreds of children dead. Resolution 2118 (2013) required the Syrian regime to dismantle and destroy its chemical weapons programme under international supervision. The joint mission of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), with the assistance of numerous Member States, largely succeeded in that task. Yet significant discrepancies remain with Syria's declaration to the OPCW, and the Al-Assad regime must cooperate, as per its obligations under resolution 2118 (2013), to resolve those.

Despite having acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Al-Assad regime has again

demonstrated its brutality by turning to chlorine as another barbaric weapon in its arsenal against the Syrian people. Today the Council has made it crystal clear that the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon is no less evil than the use of any other chemical as a weapon. The Syrian regime's use of any toxic chemical as a weapon is prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention and constitutes a violation of resolution 2118 (2013).

The OPCW's fact-finding mission was not mandated to assign culpability for the chlorine attacks. It was not mandated to do so, yet a couple of Council members are suggesting that the absence of explicit finger-pointing is a form of absolution. Let us look, instead, at what the report actually says. The fact-finding mission concluded with high confidence that there is, "compelling confirmation that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon, systematically and repeatedly" (*S/2015/138, annex 2, para. 29*), in Syria between April and August of 2014.

Further, the third fact-finding mission report lists 32 witnesses who saw or heard the sound of helicopters over three opposition-held villages — Talmenes, Al Tamanah and Kafr Zita in north-west Syria — at the time of the attacks; the vast majority of interviewees either heard or saw barrel bombs falling. Twenty-six witnesses saw a yellow cloud or dust released from those barrel bombs upon impact and 29 smelled a chlorine odour. All of us, of course, know the smell of chlorine. So let us ask ourselves, "Who has helicopters in Syria?" Certainly, the opposition does not. Only the regime does, and we have seen them use their helicopters in countless other attacks on innocent Syrians using barrel bombs.

In resolution 2118 (2013) the Security Council determined that "the use of chemical weapons anywhere constitutes a threat international peace and security". And today we have reaffirmed that any use of a chemical as a weapon, be it sarin or chlorine, is prohibited by the Security Council. As we approach the centenary the first use of chemical weapons on a large scale, at the battle of Ypres, the Security Council must continue to uphold the standards and norms against chemical weapons use and we must work individually and collectively to hold those responsible for such use accountable.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): Since the adoption of resolution 2118 (2013) in September 2013, many welcome steps of been taken to destroy the Syrian regime's chemical-weapon stockpile. Yet nearly 18 months on, we are will still faced with the persistent credible reports of chemical-weapon use.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) fact-finding mission concluded last December with a high degree of confidence that chlorine gas had been systematically used as a weapon. It also noted witness reports that these attacks were carried out by helicopter, which means carried out by the regime. We cannot accept this as a "business as usual". The use of chemical weapons presents a clear threat to international peace and security. it is a must exactly 100 years since the first recorded use of chlorine as a weapon of war, in April 1915. It was horrific then and it is totally unacceptable in the twenty-first century. We cannot change the past but we can prevent the future use of these barbaric weapons.

Resolution 2209 (2015) makes clear that use of chlorine constitutes a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Its use by the regime constitutes yet one more human rights violation. The regime's continued use of barrel bombs, starvation and denial of medical supplies amount to crimes against humanity. The United Kingdom as long argued that the situation in Syria should be referred to the International Criminal Court but, in the face of vetoes by two other Council members, that has not been possible. Today's important resolution puts the Syrian regime on notice that if we receive further credible reports of the use of chlorine as a weapon then the Security Council will take action.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan voted in favor of resolution 2209 (2015), introduced by the United States, related to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The resolution prohibits the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We voted based on our conviction that the Security Council must deal with the issue in accordance with its prerogatives under the Charter of the United Nations The use of weapons of mass destruction in Syria would have serious consequences for the country and the region.

Jordan condemns the use of all chemical weapons in Syria. It stresses that those who perpetrate such acts must be prosecuted. These are war crimes and crimes against humanity, perpetrated against thousands of innocent civilians. The perpetrators must not be above the law. Furthermore, Jordan fully the supports the activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons fact-finding mission. We stress the need to take its conclusions into consideration, in particular those pertaining to the use of chlorine as

a weapon in Syria. That is a crime and a violation of international humanitarian law and of international criminal law, as well as of resolution 2118 (2013). Such acts are indeed a threat to international peace and security. Jordan stresses that measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations should be imposed in the case of non-implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) and that a monitoring mechanism should be put in place to ensure that chemical weapons and facilities are never again used in Syria.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of France.

I would like to thank the United States delegation for having prepared resolution 2209 (2015), on the use of chlorine gas as a weapon of war in the conflict in Syria. France co-sponsored and voted in favor of this important resolution for several reasons. First of all, a year and a half after the adoption resolution 2118 (2013), the Security Council could not remain silent in the face of the horror and the unacceptable character of the attacks using chemical weapons that have continued in Syria in 2014. Today's resolution therefore sends a very strong and clear message against the use of chemical toxins as a weapon of war in Syria, by any party.

The various investigations of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) that have confirmed that chlorine gas has been used as a weapon of war in Syria, along with troubling details on the systematic presence of helicopters during these attacks, are profoundly worrisome. We know that only the Al-Assad regime has such capacities. It is indeed a tragic irony that it is just as the removal and destruction of almost all of the chemical weapons stockpiles having been declared by Syria is being completed that a toxic material not specifically banned by the Convention on Chemical Weapons has been used against the civilian population.

Secondly, through resolution 2209 (2015), the Security Council supports the important work under way in The Hague by OPCW experts aiming to shed light on the allegations on the use of chemical toxic substances in Syria. However, the allegations are continuing and we should maintain a high level of vigilance to events in Syria and urge the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the inquiry.

Finally, we hope that the adoption of resolution 2209 (2015) by the Security Council will send a clear message of deterrence on the ground to all the parties to the Syrian conflict. The Security Council cannot and will not stand idly by in the face of violations of resolution 2118 (2013). It commits through this resolution to taking the necessary steps under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations against any party that continues to violate this ban and to continue to seek to bring to Justice all those responsible for such crimes. As we commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the tragic battle of Ypres, where my country, Europe and the world discovered the horror of chemical war, we have a duty to reassert that never again shall such weapons be used.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The representative the Russian Federation has requested take the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Unfortunately, the statement made by the the representative of the United States forces me to make rather detailed comments, since Ambassador Power cast the situation in such a light as to suggest that the onus is exclusively on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Let me start with resolution 2118 (2013). She presented the situation as though that resolution were written in such a way as to prove or demonstrate something, and that only the Government of Syria had to comply. That is not the case. If we look at the text of the resolution, we see that it is clearly addressed to all parties to the Syrian conflict and that a great deal is said about non-State actors. That is no coincidence. Why was it done? It was done because in 2013 two very serious cases concerning the use of chemical weapons occurred in Syria. The first occurred on 19 March in the area of Ghouta, after which the Syrian Government immediately called for an independent United Nations inquiry. It was only as a result of the opposition of several Western members of the Security Council that the inquiry was not carried out immediately.

There was an even more tragic case on 21 August. Ambassador Power alleged, although she did not state it explicitly, that the Syrian Government was behind it. It was not. We deeply discussed that case in the Council's consultations on 16 December, at which we presented an extensive argument that not only was the Syrian Government not behind the sarin attack of 21 August, but that, for technical reasons, it could not have been

behind it. At the time, our Western colleagues did not provide any counter-argument, but merely made unsubstantiated accusations against the Government of Syria. By the way, our statement at that time can be found on our Permanent Mission's website, and I suggest that Council members familiarize themselves with it.

As for the fact-finding mission on the use of chlorine, it seems that even today the United Kingdom and the United States are pointing fingers at the Government of Syria with regard to the use of chlorine. That forces me to share with the Council our experts' assessments of that report, which we have already shared in detail in closed consultations. However, since we have heard these accusations in the Chamber, I am compelled to repeat them.

First, the entire inquiry of the OPCW is based on subjective facts provided by certain witnesses. The criteria for their selection and their status are not clear — whether they were civilians or members of illegal armed groups. Since there was a lack of clarity with the way evidence was maintained, the OPCW did not accept from witnesses and survivors samples of chemicals allegedly found at the site of the barrel bomb explosions. The clinical condition of certain witnesses described in the report co.responds to the effects of chlorine on the human body. At the same time, similar symptoms could be displayed as a result of poisoning by other toxic substances. According to the report, the Mission could not reach a concrete conclusion on which toxic substances were used in the incidents in question. Thus, it is impossible to say unequivocally that those substances contained chlorine.

During the investigation, none of the victims revealed obvious symptoms. There were no analysis of the samples immediately after the incidents, nor was there any pathological assessment of the causes of death. There are no exact figures on the number of people who suffered and there is no indication that they were present at the places where the attacks took place. It is unclear what kind of detonator was used for the gas containers, or what the purpose was of the other chemicals and ammunition — sulphuric acid and yellow and brown substances.

In the photographs and videos annexed to the report, all the ammunition appears to be primitive and homemade. Its manufacture does not correspond to the information provided by the witnesses with regard to possible methods of delivery raises questions about the possibility that Government aviation could have been used. With regard to its construction, the ammunition are casings containing 50 litres. Their detonation could not have to have the kind of consequences described by witnesses. For explosions of such wide coverage, each barrel bomb would need to contain at least 150 kilograms of trinitrotoluene-equivalent explosives, and it would be almost impossible to have that amount in those casings.

The document does not provide information about the direct links between the overflight of helicopters and the explosion of ammunition containing chlorine. Only a few witnesses heard the sound of helicopters. No one actually saw or captured the dropping of ordnance on film. In other words, the explosives could have been exploded on the ground during overflight by helicopters, especially at night. The barrel bombs described are not the made of the precursor chemicals available to the Syrian Army. The use of homemade explosives by the Syrian Army would be difficult to explain because they would cause much less damage than the powerful conventional, aviation-delivered ordnance that the Syrian Air Force is equipped with.

This is unfortunately a highly technical matter, but we have two options. We may either adopt a professional and expert approach. Of course, some people may find this boring, as the reports need to be discussed and experts must consider them, which is why no one reads them; or we can go meet the press and say that the Syrian Government is at fault. Such a media-based approach is very advantageous, but it may in practice protect those who were actually responsible for the acts that took place on 19 March and 21 August 2013 and the more recent ones involving the use of chlorine.

We provide these technical details, but our colleagues find it easier to just smile and say "We know that it is the Government that is responsible". Can we seriously work like that in the Security Council? No. We must not protect the terrorists who have use chemical weapons more than once and have used chemical substances in Iraq and Syria. Yet that is precisely the position of our colleagues. They are providing de facto protection to those individuals.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I will be extremely brief. I would just refer Council members and

anybody watching this meeting to the reports that have been prepared by the experts of the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. I would not myself deign to weigh in at the level of detail as somebody who is a diplomat and not a chemical weapons expert. I would note, however, that the Council, in the wake of the monstrous attack in August 2013, came together and did decide, very much with the Russian Federation's support and partnership, to take away one party's chemical weapons. It is a little strange to take away one party's entire stockpile of chemical weapons in the wake of a monstrous attack and then later claim that the party whose chemical weapons one has taken away is not implicated in that attack.

The President (*spoke in French*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): That logic is completely distorted. I would even put it another way. It is very strange that the United States stated that the use of chemical weapons by the Government of Syria would be a red line and that it would cause the Unites States to use force, and yet after the events of 21 August it did not do so. Therefore, the Al-Assad Government did not cross that red line. The President of the United States stated that it was a red line and then he did nothing. That means that the Al-Assad Government did not use chemical weapons. It is not just my assumption. Many observers think the same thing.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7402

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7402nd meeting
Monday, 9 March 2015, 11 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

European Union

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15-06387 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

European Union

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I warmly welcome Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom I give the floor.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on a very important subject. At the outset, I am very pleased to welcome Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union (EU).

The fathers of the Charter of the United Nations showed great foresight by envisaging a global and collective security architecture that clearly defined a place for regional agreements. Today in the area of security, the United Nations is working closely and in various ways with different regional structures. We share the burden, provide support for and take the lead in operations if we are asked to do so. The challenges are too complex for one organization or one nation to meet alone: hence the need for partnerships and innovation.

The strategic partnership between the European Union and the United Nations is deeply rooted. Our organizations share the same values and are both committed to the collective and peaceful management of security issues in order to prevent conflicts. In a time of multiple crises, it is more necessary than ever to strengthen this partnership for peace, human rights and sustainable development. It is also more necessary than ever that Europe overcome the frictions and internal difficulties it faces if it is to remain effective in the major missions it undertakes beyond its borders.

(*spoke in English*)

In recent years, the United Nations and the EU have made significant strides in working together for peace and security around the world, but we still encounter difficulties in mobilizing early action before a situation visibly deteriorates. Rapid and effective political engagement remains the single most important element for success in our preventive diplomacy efforts. The EU, which has helped to prevent conflict within its own borders, helps others to resolve their differences peacefully. It is a key actor in many international negotiations, such as the P-5+1 nuclear negotiations with Iran, the Middle East peace process and the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. EU support for United Nations diplomatic efforts in Libya has been invaluable. I also appreciate the EU's support for mediation and its funding for the United Nations stand-by team of mediation experts.

The European Union is also one of our strongest and most reliable regional peacekeeping partners, together with the African Union (AU). The implementation of the EU's 2012 plan of action to enhance support to United Nations peacekeeping has played an important role. We look forward to working with the EU on a follow-on action plan for the next few years.

The Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia are excellent examples of the comprehensive and complementary nature of the United Nations/EU partnership. In Mali, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali is working very closely with the EU Training Mission and Capacity Building Mission for the Sahel and Mali. We are also benefiting from the uniformed contributions of 13 European Member States. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic has been working effectively with the EU-led peacekeeping force, and we are on track for a seamless handover by mid-March. This experience shows the tremendous potential for EU operations to deploy as bridging mechanisms to United Nations missions. In Somalia, building on the positive experience of the security strategy designed with AU and EU support in 2013, the Security Council has mandated another joint planning exercise to take place in 2015. I look forward to continuing our joint efforts to assist Somalia in advancing along the path charted in Vision 2016.

The United Nations and the EU are not acting alone in Africa. The African Union's partnership with both organizations and its role in addressing conflict are key components of the peace and security architecture on the continent. Our three organizations are also playing important roles in addressing the threat of Ebola in West Africa.

The EU, with the capabilities of its Member States as well as the standing capacity of the EU Battlegroup, is also an indispensable partner of the United Nations on rapid response. Given the magnitude of the challenges we face, it is our responsibility to continue exploring scenarios where we can put our combined efforts to use. Both of our organizations are engaged in important reviews this year. Our peace operations review is under way, and the panel engaged in European consultations last month. Member States are also evaluating the Organization's peacebuilding architecture, and there is a 10-year review of progress on resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The European Union, in turn, will be undertaking a comprehensive security and foreign policy review of its own.

Allow me take this opportunity to once again express my condolences to the families of the victims of recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen. Terrorism requires a global and holistic response that upholds human rights and does not exacerbate the problem. I value the United Nations-EU High-level Counter-Terrorism Political Dialogue and our cooperation to prevent violent extremism through capacity-building initiatives in challenged regions and countries. I am also grateful for the financial contributions that the European External Action Service has made to key United Nations counter-terrorism capacity-building initiatives. Europe must look both outwards and inwards in order to foster global peace and security.

The United Nations is strongly committed to working with the European Union and all other players in helping to discourage the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, who pose dangers within and beyond Europe. We must also collectively work towards a peaceful, political resolution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, which threatens not only the country, but the broader European region and even international peace and security. While we all recognize that much remains to be done, our joint work over the past years has developed a solid foundation on which to build and deliver results for the people we serve.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I wish to warmly welcome Ms. Federica Mogherini, as she is participating in the Council's proceedings for the first time in her new capacity. I now give her the floor.

Ms. Mogherini (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to address the Security Council in my first months as High Representative of the European Union (EU). I thank the French presidency of the Council for this opportunity to discuss our partnership.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to thank the Secretary-General not only for his briefing, but most of all for his friendship and for the excellent cooperation we have established already during these first months.

Today is my first Security Council meeting in my current capacity, but it is the fifth on United Nations-EU cooperation. This regularity is testimony to our deepening relationship and also to the importance that the United Nations and the EU place on this relationship.

In February last year, the Security Council adopted its first presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/4) on cooperation between the United Nations and the EU, encouraging us to strengthen our institutional relations and strategic partnership. And we all know how much this is needed, in particular in these difficult times. It has been a tumultuous year in the world. Hopes for a more peaceful and cooperative global order have been shattered by blatant violations of international law, the spread of terrorists groups, crises with disastrous humanitarian consequences, and the outbreak of diseases with the potential to destroy entire regions. We did not resign ourselves to the challenges; we rose to them together. And where cooperation among different forces prevailed over confrontation, things have started to change in the right direction.

Europe's commitment to multilateralism — with the United Nations at its core — arises from our values and beliefs. But it is also an act of realism. The threats we face have never been so complex, as the Secretary-General very rightly said. They require complex, articulated responses. The time when super-Powers thought they could split the world into spheres of influence is long gone, we should all realize that. The number of regional and global actors has multiplied, and none of them can realistically aspire to facing the

challenges or truly benefiting from the opportunities alone. We need cooperation more than ever. The new global order will be multilateral, or it will not be.

We see the strategic partnership with the United Nations as a key relationship, but I should also underline the importance to us of regional partners, notably the League of Arab States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the African Union, and our regional interlocutors in Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia. Multilayered partnerships under the guidance of the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for international peace and security, will be the only possible foundation of the future global security agenda. With that in mind, I will address a few issues I am sure we all put at the top of our agenda, starting with Libya.

We need to put the country back on track, and there is not much time left. Libya needs a united and effective State, or chaos will prevail. Like the Council, we strongly support the tenacious efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General León to bring the parties together. Libya's factions should know that Europe and the whole international community is ready to help them rebuild their country by all possible means. The European Union is ready and willing to provide all kinds of assistance, in strong coordination and permanent with the United Nations and with other regional players, but first of all with our Libyan friends. We need the Libyan factions to take the first step. Libya's political leaders should now make every effort to find the necessary compromises to grasp this last chance to agree on a transitional national unity Government. That should happen within days, not weeks, as time does not work on our side.

With the deepening crisis, the Daesh franchise has been spreading thousands of miles away from the Levant. With no State control on Libya's coasts or land borders, human traffickers have already been able to put at risk the lives of too many migrants. We have witnessed the destabilizing effects of the conflict on the entire Sahel and sub-Saharan regions. Terrorism, uncontrolled migrations, regional instability — a unity Government in Libya is vital for addressing all these issues. It will be vital, first of all, for giving all Libyans the security and the decent living conditions that their country can offer and that they deserve after so many difficult years.

But these are not simply Libyan problems; they concern all of us. So it is in our common interest and our common responsibility to contribute in all possible ways and, as a matter of urgency, to solve them. Strong cooperation between the United Nations and the EU, which we have developed in these months working on the Libya crisis, is crucial. I expect that in the coming months such cooperation will become even more vital. Tackling terrorism means closing all the spaces where extremism flourishes. It is a security challenge, of course, but we should not forget its political and cultural dimensions. As I said, defeating Daesh in Libya requires a political agreement among the country's factions. The same applies to Syria. This is one of the reasons the European Union fully supports the United Nations efforts for peace. Staffan de Mistura's work for local ceasefires can pave the way towards a political solution to the crisis. We hope it may be the first move in the direction of a Syrian-led transition after too many years of bloodshed. At the same time, the grave violations committed against the civilian population demand accountability and an end to impunity.

The EU is united in its support for the work of the Council, in particular its resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014). I call on all countries to swiftly implement those resolutions with full respect for human rights and the rule of law. We believe that long-term stability and security can go hand in hand with respect for human rights and freedoms. Respect for human rights and international humanitarian law are key factors for peace and stability and a guiding principle for the European Union. At last week's meeting of the Human Rights Council, I personally underlined the strong commitment of the European Union to the human rights bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations. There is no stability without democracy; there is no security without human rights. Stability and security cannot exist without a fair trial system, a serious commitment towards good governance, the rule of law and the fight against corruption. Stability versus democracy or security versus human rights are false dilemmas. We should never fall into that trap.

But the fight against terrorism is a battle for hearts and minds, too. Daesh and other terrorist groups are trying to revive a fabricated clash of civilizations. We will not forget that the first victims of their attacks are Muslims — Sunni and Shia — Arabs, Africans and Asians. This is not a clash of civilizations; this is not a fight between Islam and the West. This is a criminal

misuse of a noble religion to perpetrate terrorist attacks in a fight for power.

As we have all realized, Daesh is good at propaganda. We need to counter its narrative both in our home countries and abroad. We need to work on our own European challenges when it comes to integration, opportunities, dialogue and respect. We need to work more with our partners outside Europe. We will follow up on the outcome of the Washington, D.C., Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, in particular through fostering cooperation, which includes education through engaging more with local communities, especially in the Horn of Africa. That is where we plan to hold our annual plenary session of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum Horn of Africa Working Group, which will take place in Uganda on 17 to 20 March this year.

We stand ready to facilitate further forms of dialogue, including the possibility of creating a round table of eminent persons from Europe and the Islamic world to encourage intellectual exchanges and promote dialogue on the roots and ramifications of terrorism in our societies. On education, the European Union will host a regional experts' meeting in early summer to involve the European Union's Radicalisation Awareness Network, and with the United Nations, we will explore options to host a high-level side event during the General Assembly's seventieth session in September to promote the message for enhanced global partnerships in countering violent extremism.

We all know how war, terror and poverty force millions of people to leave their home countries in search of a better future. We need to face the phenomenon of migration under many perspectives — international aid, crisis management, border control, integration, social inclusion. All those issues need to be tackled effectively, but there is one thing we should never forget; this is a matter of human lives — saving human lives.

We cannot let the Mediterranean, the cradle of millennial civilizations, turn into a grave for tens of thousands of innocent people. Along with my colleagues responsible for internal affairs and migration, we are promoting deeper cooperation among EU member States to find political and operational solutions to prevent further tragedies. At the same time, we are stepping up efforts to support the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, and we must face collectively, in solidarity, our duty to provide for the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. There is much work to be done to guarantee that refugees are welcomed in our societies. They should all be provided with an opportunity to pursue their own happiness and to contribute to the development of the new communities.

Social cohesion, solidarity, the protection of human life — these values are at the core of the European project. This is a test the European Union cannot fail, but we will never succeed alone. Addressing uncontrolled migration is not just a task for Europe; it is a responsibility we share. Countries of the region are already making an effort that calls for all our international support, starting with Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Tunisia and many EU countries. I can guarantee we are doing our part and will be doing so even more, but we need all countries to stand up to the challenge. It is a common interest and a common moral duty, since we need to work together for the stability of regions that in our world are facing terrible threats.

Yesterday in Kidal, a rocket attack on a camp of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali killed 2 Malian children and a Chadian United Nations peacekeeper, and injured 11 peacekeepers and 3 civilians. No more than two days ago, a terrorist attack in Bamako claimed the lives of several people, including a security officer of Belgian nationality working for the EU delegation in Mali. Those acts strengthen even more our resolve to help fight terrorism throughout the region and to conclude a peace agreement in Bamako. In Mali the EU is providing both civilian and military training missions for the reconstruction and retraining of the armed forces. This is part of a coherent medium-term strategy to build up African national capacity, enabling them to replace in due course the United Nations peace support operation.

I am pleased that the Security Council is travelling to Africa later today, as cooperation among the African Union, the EU and the United Nations is key to regional stability, and we have long-standing partnerships with both organizations. In the field of security and peace support operations, these partnerships increasingly overlap, and it is time to reflect on how this trilateral cooperation works and could work even better. As was reaffirmed at the EU-Africa Summit in Brussels in April 2014, the EU is committed to supporting Africa's efforts to manage its own security. We have

supported the African peace and security architecture from the outset and aim to give practical help at all levels — national, regional and continental — to enable its implementation.

The EU has put its money where its mouth is. In the 10 years since 2004, the EU has provided €1.2 billion in support of the African Union-led peace operations through the African Peace Facility. All in all, 16 Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations have been deployed on the African continent so far, bringing practical support and concrete results in a number of fragile or post-crisis countries. In the Central African Republic, the European Union force, under a mandate from this Council, has been working closely with both the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, to provide vital protection for the civil population in Bangui. Indeed, we feel our cooperation with the United Nations in the planning and conduct of that mission has been exemplary. Off the Horn of Africa, Operation Atalanta has helped drive piracy from the seas.

To prevent conflict, however, nothing works better than transparent and accountable Government in which all citizens and groups in a country feel represented and protected and that their concerns are heard, their needs are taken care of, and their active participation is welcomed. Hence, the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations to encourage good governance, the fight against corruption, and the full respect of constitutional rule are fundamental building blocks to prevent crises.

Through strong cooperation among the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, we can combine our efforts to the greatest effect as we face the immediate challenges and build capacities to address the underlying causes in a comprehensive and long-term perspective. This year, Africa has had to cope not only with crisis and conflict; last week in Brussels, we sent a message of hope but also of continued determination to fight Ebola. That fight will not stop until we see an end to the disease and the recovery of the countries, societies and communities affected. It is a fight that is based on cooperation, partnership, trust, and ownership of the response, in particular of local communities. It has been a fight that has been conducted primarily in West Africa by the people and authorities of the three most affected countries. It has also been very much a collective effort. The lead role of the United Nations has been crucial for all of us. It has expertise, experience and global convening power. I would like to pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his work in rallying international support. It has been very important, and will continue to be so.

As we focus on the southern border of Europe and on the neighbours to the south of our own southern neighbours, we have to face the events in the eastern part of our continent as well. What has happened in Ukraine over the past year is the most serious crisis in Europe since the Balkan Wars. And let me add here that the Balkans offer us all, today, reasons to be proud and optimistic. Exactly 20 years after Srebrenica, we see how far peace, democracy and regional integration can go, if we invest in it.

But in Ukraine, today, achieving a sustainable solution is urgent, not least due to the death toll and the humanitarian impact of the conflict. The cost of that crisis in terms of human lives is huge; almost 6,000 people have been killed and many more injured. And let us not forget the number of refugees and internally displaced persons. Fundamental norms of international law, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, are being challenged. That cannot go unanswered. The European Union condemns the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol as a violation of international law. That is also the position of the United Nations, as expressed in the 2014 General Assembly resolution 68/262.

Let me say that the United Nations counts. It was important that the package of measures adopted in Minsk on 12 Feb was endorsed by the Security Council. The ceasefire is fragile and no effort should be spared to sustain it. The withdrawal of heavy weapons is only a first step. The swift and full implementation of all points of the Minsk Agreements by all sides is key to bringing about a sustainable political solution to the conflict.

We will continue to support the implementation of the Minsk agreements, notably through in-kind and financial contributions to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission. I am constantly in touch with the United Nations Secretary-General, as well as the Secretary General of the OSCE, Mr. Lamberto Zannier, to ensure that our respective support is effective and well coordinated. We are also grateful to various

United Nations agencies for coordinating international humanitarian efforts and for their objective reporting on the human rights situation.

Our policy towards Ukraine is crystal clear — we want to put an end to the conflict. We need to put an end to the conflict and to safeguard the territorial integrity of Ukraine. But we also have to make sure that Ukraine becomes a functional State that honours the aspirations of its peoples. Whoever wishes to push towards those goals will find Europe's door wide open for cooperation. Europe was built on the principle of cooperation, both within its borders, and with our neighbours. We want to keep that as a core principle of our policies. The conflictual, complex world we live in needs more cooperation, not less, everywhere.

The most recent crises should not distract us from the Middle East peace process. Let us not forget that another war was fought in Gaza no more than six months ago. We should all put our best efforts into restarting the peace process. The alternative to peace is not the status quo. If we do not mend the wound, it will only get worse. If we do not act, more violence will come. We need action. For that reason, my first visit as High Representative was to Gaza, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Ramallah in the Middle East. Europe is ready to take its part of the responsibility in restarting the process, which is why we took the initiative of hosting, a few weeks ago in Europe, a Quartet meeting — the first one in over a year, at principals level. We need to recreate the international framework that can lead to a solution. We all know that the only way to resolve the conflict is through an agreement between the parties that ends the occupation which began in 1967, that ends all claims, and that fulfils the aspirations of both sides.

There is no other solution than a two-State solution, with a secure State of Israel and an independent, democratic, sovereign and viable State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition. We also know that we need to facilitate a regional framework that can support a solution. Out of the current regional crises, we have the opportunity to redefine a different balance that would be peaceful for all, but we have to start from the fundamentals: we need to protect the viability of the two-State solution. Israel should renew its commitment to halt all new settlements in the West Bank and should resume the transfer of Palestinian Authority revenues, in line with its obligations. The Palestinian factions should set aside their rivalries with a view to moving towards real national reconciliation, and restore governmental control in Gaza.

As I mentioned previously, I visited Gaza a few months ago. The humanitarian situation faced by the population of the Gaza Strip must be addressed urgently. Basic infrastructure and services must be restored. The European Union has welcomed pledges made by members of the international community towards the reconstruction of Gaza; those pledges now need to be honoured as a matter of urgency. The European Union calls for a fundamental change of the political, security and economic situation in Gaza, including the end of the closure, and responses to Israel's legitimate security concerns.

Direct negotiations between the parties should resume as soon as possible. The international community must take its responsibility in facilitating the resumption of negotiations. We are ready to do our part. The Quartet must redouble its efforts to facilitate a renewed peace process and, in doing so, reach out to all stakeholders, in particular in the region, to make sure that the push for peace is supported and embraced by all key actors. In that context, allow me to recall that the Arab Peace Initiative remains a cornerstone of any future peace.

The regional turmoil reinforces the sense of urgency. As Daesh challenges our frontiers, and the frontiers and sovereignty of existing States, Israel and Palestine have the chance to mutually recognize their borders and their right to security. Peace in the Holy Places could lay out the most resounding message against extremism, for the region and the whole world.

Speaking of the Middle East and of cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, we cannot forget the European Union's role — and my personal one — as a facilitator in the talks with Iran. Our aim is ambitious, and at the same time very realistic: we need an agreement that both satisfies Iran's legitimate aspirations to a peaceful nuclear programme, and guarantees the security of the region and the whole world.

The only possible deal is one that guarantees the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. There is still work to be done, and the next weeks will be crucial ones. But, we have never been so close to what could be a turning point in the history of Iran's relationship with the West and with the region. We should not waste such a historic opportunity.

Just before I conclude, allow me to look ahead. The year 2015 is a crucial year for the United Nations; not only will we celebrate its seventieth anniversary, but we will also see crucial processes coming to their conclusions and new ones taking shape — processes that will determine the global agenda for decades to come. The results will influence global security for a generation or more.

We are in the midst of discussions on the post-2015 agenda. We must advocate a truly transformative agenda. It must address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way, and everywhere in our world. Peaceful societies and freedom from violence are crucial ingredients, and peace is not possible without development and respect for human rights. Understanding these interdependencies should make us even more committed to supporting the efforts of the Secretary-General for a truly transformational and comprehensive approach to poverty eradication and sustainable development this year.

This year is also the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). It is a unique opportunity for us all to support the United Nations in its work for the advancement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and the fight against all forms of violence against women. I am pleased to have just attended the opening session of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

This is an important year, too, for our common work on peace. When peace fails, we must be willing and able to act decisively and, often, quickly. Most often the United Nations is called upon to take the lead. The result is that United Nations peacekeeping is facing ever-increasing demands. The United Nations needs to adapt its response to crises that are ever more complex and increasingly involve a large number of non-State stakeholders. Conflicts have changed; so must the means to respond to them.

The EU fully supports the review of United Nations peace operations the Secretary-General launched last year. The review is timely and very necessary. We look to the Security Council to take on the leadership role as prescribed by the Charter. The world expects the Security Council to respond decisively and timely to the crises we face.

Our Union, the European Union, is built on the same values and the same vision of a cooperative world order that led to the foundation of the United Nations, 70 years ago. In 70 years, the threats to peace have evolved continuously, and so must we. Our tools need to be updated so as to meet new challenges. But our hopes and aspirations — to save future generations from war, fight for democracy and human rights, and promote social progress — are still the same. The European Union is confident it can play a key role in working towards a more peaceful future. We seek the cooperation of others in the world, under the guidance of the United Nations. We will only succeed if we all do our part. We will only succeed if the nations of our world are truly united.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Mogherini for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I also think the High Representative for her detailed briefing.

When I make a statement on behalf of Spain, I begin with a formula stating that I fully align myself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union, which usually follows those made by members of the Security Council. On this occasion, it preceded mine and I would like to say that I align myself especially closely and enthusiastically with the statement the High Representative has just made on this, her first visit to the Security Council of the United Nations.

The European Union, as the High Representative said, is a community of values and principles – values and principles that were reflected some 70 years ago in the Charter of the United Nations and which we fully share. Those values and principles are shared by a great many regional organizations. I would like to say that the principal value shared by the European Union and all such regional organizations — and, of course, by the United Nations — is precisely that of preserving international peace and security.

The relationship between the United Nations and European Union is marked by two major milestones: the first was the Joint Declaration of 2003 and, more recently, the adoption of presidential statement S/PRST/2014/4 in 2014. The relationship between

the two organizations could not be more fruitful and positive. There are many very clear examples of far-reaching and effective cooperation, but I will limit myself to two: first, the civil and military missions of the European Union, and especially those in situations where joint operations have been carried out; and secondly, all of those areas in which the European Union provides training and equipment assistance. That is all to say that the European Union, the Security Council and the United Nations constantly strive to work together, and I would like to underscore the effective work of the delegation of the European Union and its team to that end.

Turning to the future, I would focus on two challenges facing the European Union and United Nations in their joint work. First of all, I believe there is a need to further fine-tune rapid response mechanisms. Secondly — and this is absolutely fundamental — is tripartite cooperation among the European Union, the United Nations and our African friends in the African Union.

The High Representative addressed in great detail the many crises affecting our world today. I will refer to only a few of them very briefly because she said everything there is to be said, and I fully subscribe to what she said. I would simply say that I agree that the Middle East peace process must succeed and we therefore support the appointment of a high representative of the European Union in that regard. With regard to Iran, I fully agree with her remarks; we must ensure that Iran can access nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and that its neighbours in the region can live fully in peace. Spain chairs the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006), and in my capacity as its Chairman I assure the Council that I value extremely highly the personal commitment of the High Representative to the Iranian dossier.

With regard to Libya, as the High Representative said, this issue constitutes a clear threat to peace and security in the Mediterranean and the European Union. Our ultimate aim is for the Libyan people to be able to live in peace. The principal victims of any crisis in Libya are our friends the Libyan people. We therefore welcome the fact that, as the High Representative said, the European Union will spare no effort in rebuilding Libya and supporting the political process there, where we commend the efforts of Bernardino León, who has our unequivocal support.

With regard to Ukraine, above all we must prevent further suffering for the Ukrainian population. I believe that there are clear before-and-after scenarios for the Minsk agreements of 12 February. Subsequently, there has also been before-and-after scenarios for the Security Council's endorsement of the Minsk agreements, which allows the Council to monitor the Ukrainian crisis closely. Clearly, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe plays an important role with the support of the European Union.

I would like to dwell further on Africa because Africa and Europe really do share common challenges, such as the fights against terrorism, poverty, radicalization and piracy. Several of these are shared challenges for Africans and Europeans alike because Europe cannot accept an Africa that is in crisis. That is why we always support, and Spain will always support, development, peace and prosperity on the African continent. We support the idea that Africans should always be the masters of their own destiny when it comes to resolving crises through the African Union and international and subregional organizations on the continent. We therefore welcome in particular the European Union support for the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the establishment of the African Standby Force and the African early-warning and conflict-prevention mechanisms. The recent joint meeting of the Ambassadors of the European Union Political and Security Committee and of the African Union Peace and Security Council was an excellent example in this regard.

In conclusion, as perfectly reflected in the statement of the High Representative, the European Union, through its Common Security and Defence Policy, is carrying out tireless work for international peace and security in the same areas as the Council is. Our joint cooperation must continue to make progress and be strengthened on the basis of the fundamental values that we share: respect for the law, human rights and egalitarian and comprehensive development for all persons and nations. Spain, as a member of the European Union, will defend those principles above all.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement this morning, and let me join others in welcoming High Representative Mogherini to New York to brief us today, in the first of many such briefings, I hope.

At the outset, I would like to offer condolences on behalf of the United Kingdom to the families of those killed and injured in two terrorist attacks in Mali over the weekend, among them United Nations peacekeepers, United Nations staff and European Union (EU) delegation staff.

The importance and value of the United Nations cooperation with the European Union and other regional organizations speaks for itself. In 1945, Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations specifically encouraged regional arrangements to play their part in the pacific settlement of local disputes, and the following 70 years have borne out that foresight.

The European Union, just like the United Nations itself, arose as a direct consequence of the Second World War. Building closer ties among European Union countries to foster mutual understanding and cooperation has led to a more secure Europe, which has delivered increased prosperity for citizens of EU member States. The echoes of Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations are clear to see in that progress. Both organizations champion human rights, the rule of law, development and the pacific settlement of disputes. Among many other things, International Women's Day, celebrated yesterday, highlighted the role that women play in international peace and security, another issue to which both organizations give particular emphasis.

By championing those values, both organizations contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. That is apparent in Somalia, where an African Union mission with United Nations and EU logistical and financial support has helped drive back Al-Shabaab and allowed for the re-emergence of a legitimate Somali Government working for the Somali people. In the Central African Republic, an EU force helped bridge the transition from an African Union mission to one from the United Nations. The European Union is also actively supporting the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali.

EU support to transitions has worked successfully in reverse as well. The EU force in Bosnia has taken the place of the United Nations peacekeeping mission there, supporting stability in that part of Europe and allowing the people of Bosnia to choose their own future. The continued presence of Operation Althea of the European Union-led peacekeeping force, with a mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter, is vital to preventing any return to the violent ethnic divisions that once plagued the region.

Aside from peacekeeping, the EU leadership of the E3+3 negotiations with Iran on the nuclear dossier is another strong example of how our cooperation can help counter nuclear proliferation and preserve international peace and security. That we may be close to a deal is in large part due to the diplomatic efforts of former EU High Representative Catherine Ashton, and I hope that under the guidance of High Representative Mogherini we will soon see a successful outcome to the talks.

The EU is also supporting United Nations efforts in Libya and leading on the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

While the EU can and does support the United Nations in a number of ways, there are situations in which the United Nations is unable to take action because of the position of certain Council members. In the face of such situations, the European Union can still speak out and act based on the shared values I have set out. This is particularly the case with regard to the situation in Ukraine. When the Council failed to condemn Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea last year, the European Union delivered a clear message and backed it up with clear consequences for Russia. As Russia increased its support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine and the violence there escalated, the EU ratcheted up the sanctions regime. As Ukraine's economy suffered, the EU provided significant financial support. With the Minsk agreements, an end to the hostilities is possible, but implementation of the agreements needs to be verified and effectively monitored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, if trust is to be rebuilt.

EU/United Nations cooperation has proved its worth on numerous occasions. The two organizations will continue to work together, complementing each other's efforts and thereby strengthening the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): My delegation commends, with thanks, the French presidency for convening this briefing on the cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU). We thank the Secretary-General for his remarks this morning. Let me warmly welcome Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union. We thank Ms. Mogherini for her very comprehensive briefing, especially on the

global challenges we face in the world today and on the multifaceted cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations.

It is well established that the cooperation with regional and subregional organizations strengthens United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, prevent conflict and restore stability in post-conflict situations. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides the framework for the participation of regional and subregional organizations in matters related to international peace and security under the Security Council's authority. Such organizations complement the work of the United Nations with comparative advantages, providing knowledge of specific regional issues and better understanding of the causes of conflict.

The current security challenges demand the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in crisis management, conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which no country or organization can meet alone. We therefore acknowledge the European Union's commitment to multilateralism. Its cooperation with the United Nations, in focus and scope, is a clear demonstration of that.

Angola values greatly the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the road map adopted at the fourth EU-Africa Summit, held in Brussels in April 2014, which provides the long-term framework for Africa-EU relations, to be implemented on the basis of jointly identified priorities, including peace and security, democratic governance, human rights, sustainable development and global and emerging issues. The Africa-EU partnership also enhanced the dialogue between the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council and the EU Political and Security Committee. The annual meetings between these two bodies are important tools in supporting AU efforts in the area of peace and security.

The EU provision of capacity-building in Somalia and its direct and sustained effort in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia from its beginning has played an instrumental role in bringing stability and, we hope, sustainable peace to that country. We are now beginning to see some good signs of this.

In Mali, the EU remains committed to supporting the stabilization process at the political, security, humanitarian and development levels through the implementation of the framework of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel in response to the complex challenges in Mali and in the region of the Sahel. We welcome the launching on 19 January of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy mission in Mali to help Mali ensure the return of constitutional and democratic order.

The Central African Republic is one of the most notorious cases of extensive cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations, as well as other regional organizations. The establishment, on 19 January, of an EU military advisory mission to provide expert advice on the reform of the security sector is a decision that will have an important impact on the country's stabilization.

I strongly commend the EU for its support to Guinea Bissau, a brother country to which we are particularly attached. As Guinea Bissau's main development partner, we are particularly pleased that the European Union has lifted the restrictions to cooperation with Guinea Bissau after the return of constitutional order to the country and the push made by the present authorities to change the military leadership. The cooperation extended by the EU to Guinea Bissau in conflict prevention and the provision of water and energy, aimed at restoring the basic livelihood of the people of Guinea Bissau, is most welcome. The budgetary support that is being given to the State is another means to provide the conditions for a decent life to the country's citizens. We also value the cooperation in capacity-building aimed at strengthening institutions, improving governance, promoting national reconciliation and macroeconomic stability, and the allocation of resources for projects addressing cross-cutting issues, such as gender, child protection, the environment and the support of civil society organizations of Guinea Bissau.

We acknowledge and welcome the leading role the EU is playing in finding solutions to crisis situation in the Western Balkans, in particular the involvement of the European Union in the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo. Angola also commends the commitment of the EU towards the diplomatic efforts aimed at finding a political and peaceful solution to the Ukrainian conflict and the continued economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine.

Angola encourages the EU to maintain the influence it is exerting towards finding solutions to a number of global issues, which have been presented very well today to the Security Council by the High

Representative. We therefore would like Ms. Mogherini to come back to the Security Council to strengthen this important cooperation between our two bodies.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): I cordially welcome the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms. Federica Mogherini, to the Council, and thank her and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for their briefings.

In a world that is getting flatter, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is not an option, but an essential element of preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. The European Union (EU) has been the most reliable partner in promoting the United Nations principles and strengthening respect for the rule of law. It has been one of the biggest donors of humanitarian aid. As the Secretary-General pointed out during the most recent debate on this issue (see S/PV.7112), the EU is a champion of human rights and a steadfast partner in promoting the Millennium Development Goals, advancing gender equality and tackling climate change. We see tangible results of this cooperation, as reflected in the first-ever presidential statement on institutional and strategic partnership between the United Nations and the EU (S/PRST/2014/4), adopted under the Lithuanian presidency a year ago.

The threat of terrorism has put the collective efforts of the international community to an unprecedented test. While this threat is not new, the recent tragic developments in Iraq, Nigeria, the Sahel region and elsewhere, including on European soil, attest to the capacity of terrorism to spread and transform. It is only through institutional cooperation that we are able to meet the pressing need to shape and implement effective counter-terrorism policies.

The landmark resolution 2178 (2014) provides important guidance in this regard, and is high on the agenda of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which Lithuania chairs. In December last year, the Committee heard a briefing (see S/PV.7351) by Ms. Mara Marinaki, Managing Director for Global and Multilateral Issues of the European External Action Service, on the European Union's role in the areas of common interest. Lithuania recently joined the counter-messaging working group of the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, which is in line with the EU's strengthened commitment in the field.

As reaffirmed at the EU-Africa Summit in Brussels last April, the EU is committed to supporting Africa's efforts to manage its own security. The EU continues to provide targeted assistance, notably via its Common Security and Defence Policy missions, and to financially contribute to African Union peacekeeping operations. The Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia are some examples where the EU and the United Nations work hand in hand to restore peace and bring stability. Continued and more systematic interaction of the United Nations, the EU and other regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union, is crucial for ensuring an effective collective response to the global challenges, such as an unprecedented Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The European Union has been a key partner in the United Nations and national efforts to eradicate this disease.

The EU plays an active role in encouraging parties to resume the Middle East peace process. We commend High Representative Mogherini for her personal engagement, including her recent initiative to seek further engagement of regional partners, in particular Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt. At the same time, the EU, together with its member States, remains one of the major donors of the Palestinian Authority.

The situation in Libya remains a matter of grave concern. Overcoming existing differences and forming a Government of national unity is urgent in order to save the country and prevent the spread of radical extremism and terrorism in the region. We fully support Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bernardino León's efforts in this respect. The Council must be particularly careful with its decisions on the lifting of the arms embargo and consider the impact of such steps on the wider region.

We appreciate the efforts of the High Representative aimed at reaching a comprehensive solution to Iran's nuclear issue in the framework of E3+3 negotiations. A successful outcome of this negotiation would lead to greater stability and security in the entire region and beyond.

The EU, together with the United Nations, has to continue working actively to facilitate a political solution to the Syrian conflict, which is the only way out of this tremendous tragedy. We look forward to the EU regional strategy for Syria and Iraq, as well as the Daesh threat. Ensuring accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity and violations of international humanitarian law must remain a priority.

Turning to the European neighbourhood, we are confident that the stabilization and association agreements between the EU and Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina will contribute to the overall stability of the region. EU engagement in and commitment to facilitating the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue remains crucial. We look forward to furthering the process of normalizing the relations between the two capitals as Serbia and Kosovo continue on their respective European paths. The commitment of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to undertaking reforms in the framework of the EU accession process is a solid signal.

Lithuania remains concerned about developments in the South Caucasus, where Russia continues to pursue a policy of de facto annexation of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia under the guise of so-called alliance and integration treaties, in violation of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Positive signals are badly needed in Ukraine. This conflict, caused by Russia's aggression towards its neighbour, undermines the international system that emerged out of the ashes of the Second World War and threatens international peace and security. Ceasefire agreements have been repeatedly broken by Russia-sponsored militants, causing thousands of deaths, massive displacement and enormous suffering. By adopting resolution 2202 (2015), the Council put its weight behind the Minsk agreements and the implementation of the package of measures. We must make sure that the ceasefire does not end up as badly as the previous ones. EU sanctions must be maintained as long as destabilization is ongoing. Further measures should be discussed if the Minsk accords are broken again.

Both the EU and the United Nations should continue providing support to the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The monitoring of the whole section of the Ukrainian-Russian border that has until now allowed a free flow of Russian weapons, fighters and mercenaries into the militant-held area should be ensured. The OSCE monitors should be provided with unrestricted, safe and secure access to all areas. Consolidated United Nations, EU, OSCE and Council of Europe efforts are needed in order to ensure secure, safe and unrestricted international access to the whole territory of Ukraine, including Crimea and along the border with Russia. We should also carefully study the peacekeeping option, as requested by the Ukrainian Government.

International efforts to support the Ukrainian Government and its people in dealing with the humanitarian crisis facing the country should be stepped up. Lithuania has contributed to the joint operation organized by the European Commission and Union member States through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and is providing bilateral and multilateral support in response to growing humanitarian needs in the country.

Finally, we look forward to the High Representative's further briefings to the Council.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to welcome the High Representative of the European Union (EU), Ms. Federica Mogherini, to the Security Council and to thank her for her first — and valuable — briefing since her assumption of her duties, which we hope will signal continued cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and the European Union. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his own valuable briefing.

In the complex environment in which we live and face various regional challenges, the cooperation of the United Nations with regional and subregional organizations has become ever more important to the realization of international and regional stability and peace, and an increasingly necessary strategic option in dealing with many issues and in achieving the aspirations of the United Nations, its Member States and peoples of the world.

Jordan believes that regional challenges require regional solutions and the establishment of sound partnerships among different organizations. They also require paying greater attention to relationships between the United Nations and such regional organizations as the European Union, the African Union and the League of Arab States, which would enhance the role played by all these organizations in addressing regional issues and their containment. There is no alternative to the important role played by these regional organizations in the maintenance of peace and security in their respective regions. As regional organizations, they are better able to understand the nature of the regions, their needs and the challenges they face.

The active role played by the European Union in international forums and in its bilateral and regional partnerships, not only with countries within Europe and their neighbours but with many other countries of the world, adds further importance to the United Nations work to preserve peace, prevent conflict and promote regional and international security. The common values and objectives of the United Nations and the European Union facilitate the work of both organizations in facing today's challenges in promoting human rights and equality and mediation and rapprochement among conflicting parties.

At the diplomatic and foreign policy levels, the European Union plays a major role in contributing to regional complementarity based on joint cooperation. In the face of global challenges, security threats and economic pressures in our world today, the European Union has become involved in many regional or international efforts to develop a unique and effective set of tools and mechanisms for promoting political partnership, economic support and commercial activity, as well as in dealing with crises and finding appropriate solutions for them.

Most of the challenges we face are transboundary, transcending the borders of one country or one region. The EU is a unique regional organization since it is aware that the security and stability of one region depends on what is happening in neighbouring countries and other regions. In the Middle East, the European Union plays an active and supportive role in the resolution of many issues in the region, which it considers to be one of its highest priorities and major interests in the foreign policy sphere. The States members of the European Union and countries of the Middle East also share the same vital interest and security concerns, such as terrorist organizations and transborder crime, which can only be addressed through a strong regional partnership.

The European Union is also an important member of the international Quartet, together with the United Nations, the United States of America and the Russian Federation, with a view to reaching a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli issue and the establishment of the independent State of Palestine. It is also the largest donor to the Palestinian people and considers the establishment of peace between Palestinians and Israelis to be one of its major foreign policy objectives. That in itself indicates the determination by the European Union to further contribute to the settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli issue and other thorny issues in the Middle East.

Another example of the active role played by the European Union is reflected in its great contributions to assisting Middle Eastern and North African countries in implementing political reforms, bringing about democratic transition and providing social and economic support. In Libya, the deterioration of the situation will have repercussions not only in neighbouring countries but also in Europe, the Middle East and the rest of the world. International cooperation should therefore be intensified and focus on relaunching a political dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations to find the best means to support the Libyan Government and its legitimate, constitutional institutions as they face the security and political challenges of confronting fundamentalism and terrorism so that Libya can finally and successfully complete its transitional process.

I should also mention the positive role the European Union has played in its efforts to contain crises and achieve stability in the Balkans, particularly in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Ukraine, as well as through its contribution to strengthening States' capacities in order to establish stable societies and supporting peace, security and the rule of law. The rapprochement that has been achieved among countries in the Middle East and those of the European Union has also had many positive results, including the special relationship that exists between Jordan and the EU. We have excellent cooperative relations through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Deauville Partnership, launched under a French initiative in 2011. Jordan is also the European Union's premier partner in the area of technical negotiations, particularly regarding the establishment of a partnership on migration.

In conclusion, the complex challenges we face show clearly that strengthening cooperation and coordinating our efforts, as well as exchanging expertise and lessons learned between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, has become ever more vital as we combat current threats to peace and security by developing rapid reaction systems for preventing and resolving crises and ensuring that problematic situations do not arise. It is important that such cooperation continues on the basis of our shared values and goals, and with the aim of maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would first like to warmly welcome Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to the Security Council, and we thank her and the Secretary-General for their briefings.

The Russian Federation has consistently advocated the development and improvement of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional mechanisms on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and Chapter VIII of the Charter in particular. It is on that basis, and within the framework adopted by the General Assembly in May 2011 in its resolution 65/276, that cooperation should be established between our global Organization and the European Union (EU). The European Union is a significant political and economic player in the international arena, helping to strengthen multilateralism under the leading role of the United Nations in combating new challenges and threats and eradicating poverty. We have seen the added value that the EU has brought to its cooperation, including financially, in areas involving individual countries, particularly the Central African Republic, Mali and the Sahel region as a whole, and to the efforts to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the situation concerning Iran's nuclear programme.

We have taken note of the contribution of the European Union's missions, conducted within the framework of its Common Security and Defence Policy, to international conflict-resolution efforts. Despite the fact that relations between the EU and Russia are currently being severely tested, we are ready to continue cooperating with Brussels and all European Union member States on the wide range of issues where our interests coincide. Our positions differ on some issues on the international agenda.

Nonetheless, there are a number of areas where our cooperation continues, including within the United Nations. Those include our opposition to such global challenges as terrorism, religious extremism, piracy, drug trafficking, transnational crime, illegal migration, combating the Ebola virus, dealing with the Middle East peace process and resolving the situations in Libya and around Iran's nuclear programme. We are interested in full cooperation with Brussels, but only when it is conducted on an equal footing and takes into account each other's interests and concerns. We hope the European Union will shake off the untoward influence of anti-Russian marginals among its ranks.

We have a positive experience of ad hoc joint security actions, including past operations and missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad and the Central African Republic, and currently with the anti-piracy Operation Atalanta in the area of the Horn of Africa. In that regard, it is important to remember that in implementing its crisis-management operations, the European Union and its member States should always go strictly by the relevant decisions of the Security Council. While recognizing the importance of efforts on the part of Brussels to establish a dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, we note that the sides must arrive at any agreements on their own, without any pressure and without undermining the role of the United Nations.

We have been closely following the work of the European Union's Advisory Mission for Civilian Security Sector Reform Ukraine, which was launched on 1 December. We assume that among other things, the mission will help to root out nationalist sentiment within Ukraine's law-enforcement and judicial authorities. At this stage, we see one of its main tasks as making a legal assessment of the activity of the punitive battalions of the so-called private armies in south-eastern Ukraine and helping to solve the problem of illegal Ukrainian armed groups. We are also expecting principled evaluations of the lustration law on cleansing the Government and of other laws designed to restrict the rights of certain groups in Ukrainian society. We do not understand why the European Union has still not reacted to the fact that, in association with a Ukrainian national holiday, a day celebrating the creation of the collaborationist Ukrainian insurgent army that the Nazis organized to carry out punitive operations in the occupied territories was declared national holiday.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that despite the growing demand for an effective mechanism for organizing a division of labour between the United Nations and regional associations, including the EU, the leading role of the Security Council in issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security is unshakable. It is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and cannot be subject to review.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the French presidency for convening this meeting to discuss the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements, and Ms. Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the European Union, for her briefing.

As we have indicated in previous statements in the Council, Chile believes that collective action is vital to enabling our multilateral system to deal effectively with threats, traditional or emerging. That is strengthened through the involvement of regional and subregional mechanisms, as outlined in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, as long as it is always subject to coordination by the United Nations. In that context, we believe it is essential to continue promoting increased cooperation at every stage with regional and subregional organizations in preventing crises and handling post-conflict challenges. The European Union has exceptional capacities for taking effective action on issues related to peace and security and contributing to implementation of the Council's mandates. We would like to emphasize the promotion of the rule of law and the protection of human rights as an essential dimension in rehabilitating fractured societies, areas in which we share the European Union's concerns.

My country has an interest in supporting the peacekeeping and post-conflict processes, and it was on that basis that we participated in the European Union-led peacekeeping force's Operation Althea, beginning in 2003. Based on that experience, we deepened our cooperation through a crisis-management framework agreement, designed to strengthen our capacity to develop peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, promote development of the civilian component in future operations and facilitate access to technical know-how and exchanges.

Through its political and military operations, the European Union has fostered peace and post-conflict processes in various countries and regions. Its growing number of operations in the current decade is a sign of the increase in new conflicts requiring collective action and in which the European Union can once again continue to contribute to the work of the Security Council. Its involvement in helping to restore countries affected by crises has been significant, as we have seen in its support to Mali and Somalia, its military training missions in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and its Common Security and Defence Policy missions, which are aimed at improving the capacity of the military and police forces in those countries. Another highlight is Operation Atalanta's efforts against piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia.

We also note with interest the European Union's significant efforts to ensure rapid response and deployment capacities in the face of armed conflict. It is essential that the growing cooperation with regional organizations respect the principle of national ownership, which is highly important in reinforcing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the various regional organizations throughout the world.

In conclusion, we refer to a topic of common interest to both Chile and the European Union, which is women and armed conflict. We share the concern for enhancing the protection of women in such situations, which must include women's active participation in post-conflict peacebuilding and decision-making efforts. That is particularly relevant this year as we commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). It is our belief that regional and subregional organizations should be active players in the implementation of that resolution in their political and military missions in areas of conflict. Furthermore, they should implement the seven-point plan of action proposed by the Secretary-General in 2010.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I join my colleagues in welcoming Ms. Federica Mogherini and congratulating her on her assumption of the position of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union (EU). I also thank the Secretary-General and the High Representative for their respective statements.

Malaysia fully supports the call of the Secretary-General to further expand cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations so that they may work closely together in preventing, managing and resolving crisis under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Regional organizations such as the EU have the resources, expertise and international standing to play multiple roles, including those of mediator, observer, donor and peacebuilder, in various conflict areas all over the world.

As part of the Middle East Quartet, the EU plays a vital role in contributing to the Middle East peace process towards finding a sustainable solution to the decades-long Palestinian-Israeli conflict. We are encouraged by the commitment shown by Ms. Mogherini, as reflected in her visit to Gaza last November and her increasing engagement with the leaders of the Palestinian Authority. Malaysia welcomes the statement made by the High Representative last November, which stressed the need for a Palestinian State as the ultimate goal and position of the EU, based on a two-State solution with

an independent, democratic, viable State of Palestine living side by side with Israel and its other neighbours in peace and security.

Malaysia lauds the continuing financial support by the EU in building institutions and infrastructure in the occupied Palestinian territories with the aim of creating a viable Palestinian State. We also welcome the recognition of the State of Palestine by Sweden last year, and we hope to see more EU members moving towards a similar direction in the near future.

As a regional organization that prides itself on its core values of protection of human rights and the rule of law, we urge the EU to be at the forefront of ending impunity in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially in view of the massive atrocities committed against the Palestinian civilians during the Gaza conflict last year, the continuing expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, the continuing construction of the separation wall by Israel, contrary to the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, and, recently, the withholding of tax revenues by Israel in violation of its obligations under the Paris Protocol of the Oslo accords.

We have heard repeated warnings from the United Nations, including from the Secretary-General, regarding the unsustainability of the situation in occupied Palestinian territories due to continuing Israeli occupation. We have also noted the widespread disillusionment with the Middle East Quartet, especially on the part of the region. We sincerely hope that the international community will heed the warnings and start to tackle the root causes of the conflict, rather than continue with its piecemeal response of addressing the symptoms of the crisis. In that regard, we look forward to the early resumption of negotiations on the Middle East peace process and we call on the EU, as a Quartet member, to intensify its efforts towards that end.

Meanwhile, on Iran's nuclear programme, Malaysia recognizes the pivotal role played by the EU in resolving the issue, within the context of the ongoing E3+3 negotiations with Iran. Following the landmark Joint Plan of Action of 24 November 2013, we are now witnessing the potential culmination of a truly historic agreement, which my delegation hopes will bring about a final and peaceful resolution to the Iranian nuclear issue. Malaysia encourages all parties to continue their efforts towards dialogue and understanding, with a view to bridging the gaps that remain.

On Africa, we commend the role and contribution of the EU in the African region, from conflict prevention to conflict management and post-conflict transition and sustainable development. We also acknowledge the support of the EU in sharing its technical expertise to ensure the success of electoral processes in African countries, including in Burundi.

With regard to the situation in Mali, Malaysia wishes to take this opportunity to extend our condolences to the families of victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Bamako and Kidal, on 7 and 8 March, that killed civilians and United Nations personnel, including a staff member of the EU delegation. We strongly condemn that atrocious act.

We commend the significant role of the EU in supporting the Algiers process. As a co-mediator, the EU continues to play its constructive role in assisting the Malian parties with a view to achieving national reconciliation and a long-lasting, peaceful solution. We view that continued commitment of the EU, in close cooperation with the United Nations and the African Union, as essential at this particularly crucial juncture.

On Libya, Malaysia notes the ongoing efforts of the EU in providing humanitarian assistance to asylum-seekers in the Mediterranean region. We also welcome the possibility of the EU's playing a greater role in monitoring and preventing the illicit flow of arms and oil in the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the security threats posed by terrorism in the region.

The volatile security situation and dire humanitarian predicament in the Central African Republic require our sustained attention. The multifaceted involvement of the EU in the Central African Republic, including its military operation in the Central Africa Republic (EUFOR RCA) exemplifies the vital role that the international community can play alongside the United Nations in restoring peace and security to the Central African Republic. We commend EUFOR RCA for its important contribution to stabilizing the security situation in Bangui and note the end of its mandate on 15 March. We welcome the decision of the EU to deploy the EU military advisory mission to the Central African Republic, which we hope will continue the momentum in strengthening the security sector in the Central African Republic and building the foundations for long-lasting stability.

Within Europe itself, the Ukrainian crisis is threatening the security and stability of the region.

We applaud the initiative taken by key EU members, particularly France and Germany, in engaging with the conflicting parties to de-escalate the crisis. We welcome the resulting agreement on the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements, which was subsequently endorsed by the Council. We call on all parties to fully comply with the provisions of the agreement to facilitate a final political solution to the crisis and for the EU to play a constructive role towards that end. We also follow with great interest the EU's recent launching of a review of European neighbourhood policy in order to build strong partnerships and to better tackle the challenges faced by the EU in its relations with its neighbours.

In the western Balkans, we commend the stabilizing role played by the EU in the post-conflict countries in the region, such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. We welcome the breakthrough in normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia, as well as the continuing commitment by Ms. Mogherini in facilitating the high-level talks between Pristina and Belgrade on 9 February 2015 in Brussels.

We also fully support the continuing role played by the EU in further strengthening democratic institutions, the rule of law and the process of reconciliation; in capacity-building; and in creating a functioning market economy in the western Balkans.

By way of conclusion, Malaysia welcomes the reaffirmation by the High Representative of the EU that the EU will continue its close cooperation with the United Nations in upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. As a Council member, Malaysia reiterates its commitment to play a constructive role in further engaging with regional organizations, especially one as successful and established as the EU, in maintaining international peace and security.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): New Zealand, too, welcomes High Representative Mogherini to the Council and thanks her for her briefing.

New Zealand is a strong believer in cooperation between the United Nations and regional bodies within the framework of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. While we will always assert the primacy of the Council and the unique authority vested in it by the international community, it is clear that local knowledge and perspectives are essential to our shared goal of maintaining international peace and security.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to cooperating with regional organizations. Each has potential to assist in the Council's work, regardless of size or resources. The European Union (EU) provides a good example of how regional bodies can interact effectively with the United Nations, but other regional organizations have their own approach. As we know from our experience in the Pacific, the United Nations can support long-term stability only through genuine and respectful engagement with local actors.

The EU's role in ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in its own region is well known. With conflict prevention at the very core of its foundation and existence, and its proximity to and links with conflict-beset regions, it is well placed to play a role across the breadth of the Council's agenda.

It is not possible to canvass all the possibilities here today, but there are some of particular and recent importance.

New Zealand strongly supports the achievement of a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran, and we acknowledge the E3+3's constructive role in those complex negotiations. And, as New Zealand told the Council during the January open debate (see S/PV.7360), the Middle East conflict between Israel and Palestine is an ongoing and serious threat to international peace and security.

We believe that the Council has a role to play in bringing the parties to the table, hopefully to negotiate a two-State solution. We acknowledge the EU's considerable efforts towards that same goal.

We also applaud the EU's part in the international efforts to manage the humanitarian impact of the Syria crisis, both within Syria and in the wider region. In Africa, the EU has demonstrated the value it can add to the Council's work through its long-term commitment in Mali and Somalia, to name but two countries.

In the Central African Republic, which the Council will visit this week, an EU force has strongly supported the efforts made by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and France to stabilize the security situation. That force is about to be replaced by an EU military advisory mission, hopefully foreshadowing the Council's continued engagement with the EU and other stakeholders, so that the people of the Central African Republic can finally see real peace dividends.

Looking forward, New Zealand urges the EU to maintain its focus on conflict prevention, working with regional organizations, not least in Africa. Given its history, geography, size and experience, the EU has particular advantages and perspectives that it can bring to bear. It is in all of our interests that it should apply all that to building partnerships that prevent the emergence or re-emergence of conflict. In doing so, it will always have the support of New Zealand.

That is because a firm belief in more active prevention of conflict under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter is one of the fundamental reasons why New Zealand sought membership in the Council, and we look forward to working with the European Union in pursuit of that goal.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I should like to welcome European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini to the Security Council and to thank you, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General for your briefings today.

As you rightly point out, Mr. President, we face pressing and unprecedented challenges that are as diverse as they are dangerous. Our approach to each of them underscores the depth and importance of our partnership with the European Union (EU), and I would like to discuss a few of these this morning.

All of us, from countries near and far, have watched with horror as medieval barbarism has engulfed swathes of territory in Syria, Iraq and northern Nigeria. Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have demonstrated more than a zeal for cruelty; they have a professed disgust for modernity. Rational thought, diversity of faith and difference of any kind is used as justification for crimes so barbaric they shock our conscience.

And yet, despite this unfolding horror, we see too many citizens of too many nations, including many of those represented around this table, travelling great distances to join this crusade of cruelty. If we are to advance the cause of international peace and security, if we are to protect the most basic freedoms of faith, expression and thought, if we are to prevail over terror, we must remain strong in our condemnation of, and united in our resolve to confront, those who facilitate, conspire or participate in the murderous work of ISIL and Boko Haram. And when their depraved ideology manifests itself further abroad, whether in the offices of a French paper that expressed itself through satire or in the slaughter of innocents shopping in a kosher market, we must remain resolute in our determination to defeat this new threat to our global society and our collective freedoms.

As such, we welcome the European Union's recent announcement of a €1 billion package to address the situation in Syria and Iraq and to advance the fight against ISIL. The EU's release of a regional strategy in February is a valuable addition to the international community's response to this crisis.

While we speak often of countering violent extremism, and we all agreed in resolution 2178 (2014) that this is an essential element in responding to the foreign terrorist fighter threat, we know too little about what works and even lack a shared understanding of what it means. One Member State's countering extremism can become another Member State's definition of political repression. We should not gloss over the potential for manipulation, but neither should we shy away from tackling the problem of too many people, in too many countries, signing up with terrorist organizations that seek to threaten the very fabric of our civilized world.

Countering violent extremism, therefore, must be an active process of engagement at the local level providing services to those who need them, resources to those without them, building resilience in communities targeted for recruitment, and highlighting paths to peace for those being drawn down the roads of terror. Doing any of this is a lot harder than talking about it, and that is why the White House convened a high-level summit focused on countering violent extremism in Washington last month, to help share best practices, develop new strategies and seize opportunities. We are encouraged by the level of support and pledges already announced by our partners, including the European Union, to follow up on the principles and goals agreed upon at the summit. That is a challenge that we must confront, and we must succeed.

The fight against terrorism unites each member of the Council. We should be just as unified in our respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of fellow Member States. Over the past year, however, we have seen peace in Europe challenged in the most fundamental manner. Russia, a permanent member of the Council, has taken it upon itself to seize territory, sponsor instability and redraw

the international borders of its neighbour Ukraine. We commend the actions the European Union has taken, including the imposition of sanctions, to exert pressure on Russia to de-escalate the situation in Ukraine. Those sanctions must remain in place until Russia fully implements its commitments under the Minsk agreements. We will continue to work with the EU and to use all available multilateral avenues to seek a swift resolution to the ongoing conflict, which has caused so much suffering to the Ukrainian people. The September Minsk agreements have been signed. The package of measures to implement the Minsk agreements has also been signed. Now it is time for those agreements to translate into changed behaviour. Both Russia and the separatists it supports are signatories to the Minsk implementation plan, and we expect Russia and the separatists it supports to honour the agreements they have signed.

The European Union and the United Nations are key partners in the efforts to advance Middle East peace, including in their role as members of the Quartet. We remain committed to working with the parties and all of our partners to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. Despite some biased accounts of the facts on the ground that we have heard today, we continue to believe that final-status negotiations are the only way for the parties to reach a peaceful resolution.

Of course, in order to ensure peace and stability in the Middle East, we must ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. Iran's nuclear programme is rightfully a matter of deep and serious concern for the entire world. We believe that diplomacy is the preferred route to our shared aim to ensure that Iran does not ever obtain a nuclear weapon. That is why we continue our critical work with the EU in the P5+1 negotiations. That is why we must ensure that Iran cooperates seriously with the International Atomic Energy Agency. That is why we must stringently enforce the resolutions adopted by the Council. We must not allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons.

When it comes to peacekeeping, all of us must do more. The Organization needs the support of advanced militaries now more than ever. We have seen the role EU civilian and military operations have played to battle piracy off the Horn of Africa, to train troops in Mali, to strengthen security in the Central African Republic, to build civilian capacity in the Niger. Twenty years ago, European countries were also leaders in United Nations peacekeeping; 25,000 troops from European militaries served in United Nations peacekeeping operations, more than 40 per cent of the Blue Helments at the time. Today, United Nations peacekeeping would benefit exponentially from a more diverse array of troop contributors and other forms of assistance. As Ambassador Power announced just hours ago in Brussels, that is why President Obama will be hosting a summit of world leaders in September in New York to help ensure that the United Nations and the world have the peacekeepers needed to address today's crises.

The values on which the European Union was founded are the same ones that give strength to the United Nations. They are the values that catalyse our collective action and animate our pursuit of peace and security. They are the values that recognize the strength and diversity of expressions, richness in diversity of perspectives, resilience in diversity of belief and faith in the enduring promise of equality and freedom for all. As we navigate the many challenges and threats we confront, we will continue to rely upon and take great pride in our and the Organization's deep and enduring partnership with the European Union.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at this meeting. We also wish to thank Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, for her briefing.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela attaches special importance to the role of regional organizations in promoting international peace and security, including through the negotiated settlement of conflicts. We welcome the efforts of the European Union (EU) and other regional forums in that regard. We are convinced of the role that regional and subregional organizations can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in the peacebuilding process through the recovery, reconstruction and development of societies emerging from conflict situations. We believe that close cooperation should be maintained between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the European Union, taking into account Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. In the area of crisis management, we believe that the European Union and its members must act in accord with the principles of the Charter.

We value the role played by the the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo under the auspices of the Organization.

We welcome the prospects for a political solution in Ukraine, which have recently moved in a positive direction with the decision adopted by the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany on 12 February in Minsk and endorsed by the Council in resolution 2202 (2015). We commend the ongoing work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to support the effective implementation of the Minsk agreements, including the withdrawal of heavy weapons by those involved. We reiterate that the parties must strictly observe the Minsk agreement of 12 February on the protection of civilians and support a process to address the humanitarian situation.

In the Middle East, the intensification of armed conflicts and the maintenance of colonial situations and foreign occupation have had a negative impact on international peace and security, the facts and the gravity of which we cannot remain indifferent. We are convinced that the European Union and the Security Council are called upon to play an important role in the promotion of a definitive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including putting an end to the occupation of Palestinian territories and the establishment of a free, sovereign and independent Palestinian State within the secure and internationally recognized pre-1967 borders.

We reiterate our conviction that there can be no military solution to the current crisis in Libya. We urge that efforts be redoubled to facilitate dialogue, reduce tensions and refrain from taking any decision that may worsen those tensions. To that end, we welcome the resumption of negotiations in Morocco, facilitated by Mr. Bernardino León's efforts, in order to reach a political solution that leads to the formation of a Government of national unity. In that regard, we must continue to encourage the parties to continue the inclusive dialogue to achieve a strong and lasting peace that leads to national reconciliation. We also appeal to external actors with influence on the parties to refrain from adopting measures contrary to peace, security and the development of Libya.

We continue to nurture the hope that peace and political stability in Burundi will be consolidated and that all the necessary support will be given to the people and the Government of that country, so that the upcoming elections can be conducted successfully under the sovereign right of the people of Burundi to self-determination. We also call for strengthening international cooperation to assist that country, without any preconditions, with a view to eradicating poverty, which is one of the root causes of conflicts affecting the States of the region.

Peace efforts promoted by the United Nations in the Central African Republic must be accompanied by the simultaneous and sustained efforts by the international community to provide cooperation and economic assistance aimed at reducing poverty and inequality in order to achieve a long and enduring peace. The support of the Organization to the upcoming elections serves to underscore the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations in the search for lasting peace.

Finally, we hope that those channels of cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union will contribute to international peace and security.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his briefing and for his leadership in consolidating the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, which he has so well conceptualized in his statement this morning.

We also want to express our appreciation to Ms. Federica Mogherini for her inaugural briefing to the Security Council in her capacity as High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to her predecessor, Catherine Ashton, for her contributions to strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union (EU), and especially for her efforts to advance the achievement of peace and security around the world.

Nigeria acknowledges the pivotal role of the EU as a key partner of the United Nations and various regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We believe that over time the EU has demonstrated a high level of commitment to the promotion of human rights, development cooperation and humanitarian assistance on a global level. In terms of the maintenance of peace and security, the European Union has made substantial contributions in various arenas across the world. In 2014, the European Union deployed a peacekeeping mission to the Central African Republic to support African Union and French forces

already on the ground. Nigeria pays tribute to the men and women who served in that mission, and commends them for the strident efforts made in the execution of their mandate, even in extremely challenging circumstances. The mission contributed significantly to the protection of civilians in and around Bangui.

In the case of Mali, in April 2014, the EU established the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy Sahel Mali mission, with an initial mandate of two years. The mission is a key aspect of the EU's support to Mali. It involves the training of the country's security forces and helping the State to restore and maintain its authority across the entire Malian territory. The European Union Capacity Building Mission complements the EU training mission, which is involved in the reorganization of the Malian military. Nigeria commends the EU for its assistance to Mali and recognizes its significant role in enhancing the capacity of the Malian military and security forces in meeting the enormous security challenges of that country.

In today's world, we all agree that terrorism constitutes one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. The Sahel is one of the regions where terrorism is assuming alarming dimensions. Through its Sahel strategy, the EU is working with the States in the region to promote good governance and social cohesion and to strengthen political stability and security. The strategy involves enabling sustainable development, creating prosperity and combating violent extremism in the Sahel so that the region will cease to be a safe haven for terrorist groups. Nigeria commends the EU for the resources it is commiting to fighting terrorism in the Sahel, which demonstrates a clear recognition that terrorism in any region of the world is a threat to all regions, and that fighting terrorism is indeed the collective responsibility of all nation States.

In the European arena, the European Union was a major contributor to the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), which authorizes international organizations to establish a security presence in Kosovo. Today, the EU plays a key role in promoting the rule of law in Kosovo through the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosova (EULEX), established in 2008. EULEX has also supported the dialogue aimed at normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia. Some of the Mission's notable achievements in that regard include the implementation of the freedom of movement agreement between Kosovo and Serbia. That agreement allows residents of Kosovo to travel freely in Serbia with identity cards and vehicle licence plates issued in Kosovo. We see that as creating an avenue for person-to-person contact between Serbs and Kosovars, which could lead to better understanding between them. EULEX also facilitated the integration of Kosovo Serb police officers into the northern command of the Kosovo police.

The inextricable link between security and development makes it essential for greater attention to be paid to the development needs of States. In many developing countries, resource constraints are major impediments to development. That is when and where donor support becomes very vital. In terms of development cooperation, the EU provides more than half of global development assistance, making it the largest donor in the world. The European Development Fund, through which the EU disburses development assistance to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, has been used to support receiving countries in a broad range of sectors, including agriculture, the environment, infrastructure, education and health. The Fund also supports the promotion of the rule of law, good governance and democracy. The eleventh European Development Fund, which covers the period 2014-2020, involves a total of €31.5 billion. That represents a substantial increase over the €22.6 billion provided under the tenth Fund, which covered the period 2008-2013. Nigeria appreciates the EU's unwavering commitment to the promotion of international development. Through that, the EU has touched the lives of millions of people around the world.

We would like to reiterate our strong support for the engagement between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in consonance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The European Union model is an exemplary one that demonstrates how cooperation among States can work for the maintenance of international peace and security. That model of engagement is even more urgent in our world today, as unprecedented threats and challenges have not only transcended national boundaries, but moved beyond the capacity of any single State to tackle. All the inputs around the table this morning point to that one single phenomenon: no one State can handle the level of threat in the world today. This is a call for collective action.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank France, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to hold this meeting on the cooperation between the

United Nations and the European Union. We have listened carefully to the briefings by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Ms. Federica Mogherini.

In recent years, in cooperation with the United Nations and the Security Council, the European Union (EU) has played an active role in efforts to address regional hotspot issues such as the nuclear question in Iran, and conflicts in the Middle East, Mali, the Central African Republic and Burundi, which China welcomes. We encourage and support the EU to continue to play a constructive role in maintaining regional and international peace and security. We hope that, in carrying out cooperation with the United Nations and the Security Council, the EU will above all uphold the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, such as the sovereign equality of States and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and commit itself to addressing hotspot issues through mediation and good offices.

Secondly, it must respect the sovereignty and specific conditions of countries when it comes to human rights, engage in dialogue and exchanges on the basis f mutual respect and equality and play a constructive role. Thirdly, we hope it would leverage its resource advantage to provide economic and social assistance according to the needs of the countries concerned and on the basis of respect for national ownership, so as to enhance their self-development capacity in order to address the root causes of conflicts. This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and of the world's victory in the war against fascism. In February, at China's initiative, the Council held an open debate on maintaining international peace and security (see S/PV.7389). We hope that that debate may prompt Member States to learn the lessons of history and recommit themselves to the purposes and principles of the Charter of United Nations and, looking forward, to explore effective ways of maintaining international peace and security in changing circumstances and dedicate efforts to building a new type of international relations, with win-win cooperation at the centre.

In the face of the current proliferation of global and regional challenges, the security interests of all countries are closely linked. The United Nations is at the core of the international collective mechanism, and the European Union is an important force for maintaining international peace and stability. Further strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations such as the European Union is conducive to advancing multilateralism and consolidating and strengthening the international collective security mechanism.

Just as pointed out by Chinese President Xi Jinping in his statement at the College of Europe, in Bruges, Belgium, on 1 April 2014, whatever the vicissitudes of the international situation, China always supports the process of European integration and a united, stable and prosperous European Union playing a greater role in international affairs. China will continue to support the EU in further strengthening cooperation with the United Nations in maintaining regional peace and stability and promoting economic development so as effectively to complement the work of the United Nations.

China attaches great importance to its relations with the EU. Chinese President Xi Jinping made a successful visit to the headquarters of the EU last year, where he agreed with the leaders of the European Union to establish partnerships for peace, growth, reform and civilization, and set down important plans for the development of China-EU relations. This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of relations between China and the European Union. China stands ready to continue to strengthen efforts to implement the common understanding reached by the leaders of both sides, to promote the strategic framework for China-EU cooperation towards 2020, strengthen communication and coordination on major issues, promote the sustainable, healthy and stable development of the strategic partnership, and work togethe to make new contributions to world peace, stability and prosperity.

Mr. Gombo (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the French delegation for having organized this meeting on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, with a focus on the European Union. I would like to convey my gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, for their briefings.

The Charter of United Nations confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. In Chapter VIII, the Charter provides for partnerships with regional and subregional organizations with a view to maintaining international peace and security. In

that regard, Chad welcomes the progress made through partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the European Union. We believe that the United Nations and the European Union are complementary and that the cooperation between them is exemplary.

We have taken note of the various activities carried out by the European Union around the world, some of which are referred to in presidential statement S/PRST/2014/4, of 14 February. Given the multiple crises currently facing the world, particularly in Africa, we urge the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union to strengthen their triangular cooperation. In Africa, we must tackle together the new wave of challenges represented by terrorism, violent extremism and transnational organized crime, especially in West and Central Africa, the Sahel and the Maghreb.

We encourage the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union to consider ways to strengthen their partnerships for the prevention, settlement and management of conflicts and for peacekeeping. We reiterate our call to continue to pursue together the aim of an Africa free of armed conflict by 2020, in keeping with the solemn declaration adopted on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of founding of the precursor to the African Union.

We welcome the contributions of the African Union and its regional economic communities, which initiated the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, in the Sudan, the African Union Mission in Somalia, the African-led International Support Mission in Mali and the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA). We welcome the important role played by the European Union, particularly its African Peace Facility, to support African Union operations.

In the Central African Republic, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), which took over from MISCA, has achieved some improvement, despite the continuing presence of armed groups. We are nonetheless concerned by continuing acts of violence taking place in Bangui and other provinces, including murders, arbitrary detention, obstacles to the provision of humanitarian aid, drug-trafficking, arms trafficking, the illicit exploitation of the country's natural resources, attacks targeting international forces and the kidnapping of humanitarian workers and even members of the Government.

We welcome the role played by the forces of Operation Sangaris and the European Union Force, as well as their contributions to maintaining order in Bangui and some other provinces, including the training of the first police and gendarmerie units. The drawdown of those forces, planned for March 2015, is nonetheless cause for concern, as it risks compromising MINUSCA's aim of deploying troops and police beyond Bangui to ensure the smooth holding of the elections.

Moreover, we condemn the situation of the civilian population, which has seen scant improvement, as well as that of displaced persons, who remain in distress due to the prevention of the delivery of food aid. We call for the necessary steps to be taken to ensure that displaced persons and refugees are able to participate in the upcoming electoral process.

In Mali, the will of the parties, the support of the international community and the determination of the mediation team allowed the parties to reach an agreement in Algiers on 1 March, following eight months of work. We commend Algeria and the entire mediation team for their efforts. We believe that the agreement needs to be signed by all of the parties concerned, as it represents a decisive step towards a solution to emerge from the crisis.

Moreover, Chad firmly condemns the terrorist attacks committed last weekend, including in Bamako, and the attacks against the Kidal headquarters of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. We express our condolences to the families of the victims and to the Governments of the countries affected. We believe that those acts of violence were aimed at undermining the ultimate signing of the agreement, whose implementation could make possible the return of peace and stability. The international community must send a firm, clear message to warn those who obstruct peace.

Chad acknowledges the active contribution of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali throughout the process of the Algiers talks and calls on it to be ever more vigilant in dealing with other possible terrorist attacks against its facilities and personnel. We ask all countries and organizations that have influence over the Malian parties and that have not yet done so to persuade them

to join the 1 March agreement as soon as possible so as to enable it to be signed on 28 March as expected.

In conclusion, we express our gratitude to the European Union for its contributions to the maintenance of peace and security around the world, in particular in Somalia, Mali and the Central African Republic. We call on the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union to further strengthen their trilateral cooperation to respond to all the challenges facing Africa. In that respect, the situation in Libya — and the Sahel in general — the terrorist threat posed by Boko Haram, illegal trafficking and transnational organized crime should command the full attention of the international community. To better face those challenges, particular emphasis must be placed on the relationship between development and security. In that respect, the effective implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel will, in our humble opinion, contribute to improving, at the very least, the security situation.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of France.

I warmly welcome Ms. Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union and Vice-President of the European Commission. It is always a pleasure to welcome to the Chamber a representative of that major player in security and international stability, the European Union. I welcome her presence here for the first time, as mentioned, since her appointment.

The European Union is a key partner of the Security Council in dealing with most of the crises it has before it. Ms. Mogherini has gone into detail on that, and I will not go over it again.

In our view, the European Union's work is complementary to that of the Council. The European Union has been able, to act decisively in recent years, in particular in Africa. Last year in the Council, we welcomed the European Union's work in training the Malian security forces, which complemented the work of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali. We then entrusted the Europeans to do the same in Central African Republic. That was done through the deployment of the EU-led force in the Central African Republic (EUFOR-RCA), beginning on 1 April 2014, which has made significant contributions to the efforts to provide security and protection to civilians in Bangui, again in support of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, then the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

This week, as the EUFOR-RCA mission comes to an end, I want to commend the work of the mission and highlight the continued commitment of the European Union to Central African Republic, since an assistance mission to reform the Central African armed forces will immediately take over. The work in the Central African Republic shows that the European Union knows how to engage effectively and quickly, and we thank the European External Action Service for its work in mobilizing European partners.

In addition to its deployment on the ground, the European Union is also a valuable partner of the United Nations in finding sustainable solutions to the major crises that concern us. The fight against Boko Haram will therefore be a priority in the coming months.

On the Iranian nuclear issue, we thank the High Representative for her exemplary engagement with the E3+3. The European Union plays a crucial role in the talks with Iran aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement of the crisis. Much remains to be done, but we are fully committed to reaching a solution.

That is now also the case with the crisis in Ukraine, which has entered into a new phase with the signing, on 12 February, of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Again, the European Union is taking part in the efforts to find a solution to that crisis, with support from the Council through resolution 2202 (2015). Let us recall that the European Union has resorted to sanctions, on that issue as on many others, not to punish but to encourage the stakeholders to engage in dialogue. The link between sanctions and the implementation of the entire Minsk package was recalled last week by European leaders. The EU is indeed mustering its efforts at the diplomatic, financial and humanitarian levels for a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Ukraine.

In the Middle East, the EU will continue to play its role within the framework of the Quartet and beyond, as a major player seeking to preserve the two-State solution in the face of ongoing colonization, and to contribute to finally achieving a peace agreement. That is also the case in Libya, which is the most serious crisis in the region to the south of the EU. The European Union actively supports the efforts of Special Representative

of the Secretary-General Bernardino León. I know that Ms. Mogherini is personally involved in that. The resumption of the Libyan political dialogue should help achieve a comprehensive solution, and the European Union should play a key role in supporting that process.

Finally, the European Union, which is a undertaking without precedent, is working to promote a new order in its immediate neighbourhood and beyond by establishing the rule of law, democracy and human rights as elements for peace and security. Built on the ideal of bringing peoples together to transcend nationalism, the European Union has created a unique model that has significant appeal.

That model continues to work in support of peace and security, particularly in the Balkans, which were long battered by war after the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. Today more than ever, the European Union is working for rapprochement between Serbia and Kosovo, by promoting their bilateral dialogue and offering them a fair place in a peaceful regional environment that is focused on its collective development. After the electoral pause in those countries, we look forward to the resumption of their dialogue at the highest level on 9 February with the help of the High Representative. We earnestly hope for the continuation of those efforts.

The process of normalization is also under way for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which the European Union is supporting on its road to stabilization, in particular through European Union Force Operation Althea. Under the leadership of Ms. Mogherini, the European rapprochement of Bosnia and Herzegovina has gained new momentum. It is crucial that the country resume its journey on the path of reform, with a view to also joining the European Union at the appropriate time.

Wherever the European Union is working, it contributes to the ideals of peace, freedom and human progress that the United Nations embody. It is thus an indispensable partner for the United Nations. That special role was reflected four years ago in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 65/276, through which the Assembly recognizes the European Union's place as a partner and friend of the United Nations.

I would also like to emphasize today, while expressing my best wishes for success to Ms. Mogherini in her work, that the European Union is more than a regional organization. It is an integration project without precedent in history and one of the pillars of a coherent and effective international system.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Ms. Mogherini.

Ms. Mogherini (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to have participated in this debate, which was very important for me personally and for the European Union. I assure you that I am ready, both personally and on behalf of the European Union, to work to maintain our friendship and partnership with the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, in the months and years to come. As you said, the European Union is not only a regional organization, it is also the most significant regional integration process in the world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I warmly thank Ms. Mogherini.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.